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ABSTRACT

This compendium contains 40 ERIC Digests published by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management from 1988 to 1991. Listed alphabetically by title, the digests discuss a wide range of topics related to school management and administrative responsibilities, followed by 8 to 15 references. Topics covered include AIDS/HIV education; evaluation of students, personnel, and academic programs; school finance, accountability, and fiscal policy concerns; school safety and security issues; treatment of racism, sexual abuse, drug abuse, and drug-affected children; programs for at-risk youth and their families; and recruitment of minority teachers. Other topics are changing school demographics; team management, school-based management and school restructuring; policy analysis; strategic planning; teacher and administrator preparation; the state-school district relationship; the role of education; magnet schools; and parental involvement in the education process. Each of these Digests also appears separately in the ERIC database. (MLH)

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1988 - 1991

A COMPENDIUM
of Forty Titles

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PREFACE

The ERIC Digest series is ideally suited to the reader who wants a quick overview of information on a particular topic. Each Digest condenses the most pertinent facts, ideas, and issues on the topic into two pages containing about 1,500 words, a memorable feat in this age of information overload. For those who want to explore the topic further, a list of major pertinent resources ends each Digest.

Digests are also written in a clear language that can be easily understood by a broad audience, which includes school board members, school administrators, teachers, and other members of the community. A question-and-answer format guides the reader through the most prominent issues and subtopics.

This compendium serves up a full meal of forty Digests that were published by the Clearinghouse over a four-year period from 1988 to 1991. No attempt was made to revise the older Digests, though in the process of reformatting them for this compendium a few editorial changes were made for the sake of consistency.

For ease of reference, the Digests are listed alphabetically by title. To find out when each Digest was written, look for the number and date at the end of the list of resources. For example, "AIDS/HIV Education," the first Digest in this compendium, is number 38 and was written in 1989.

Philip K. Piele
Professor and Director

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AIDS/HIV EDUCATION

If AIDS education hasn't already been mandated by your state, it may be soon. Increasingly, school administrators and board members will feel pressure to implement HIV* education programs. Teenagers are one of the highest at-risk groups, and, as John Washburn, a former superintendent who has AIDS, has pointed out (Kathleen McCormick 1989), education is the only vaccine we presently have against HIV.

When administrators begin to approach this issue, however, they often find themselves aswirl in controversy. HIV education, because it has to do with community values, religious beliefs, and customs, is a complex and sensitive subject. It involves talking about sex and also about death and dying, topics that make many people feel uncomfortable. In addition, although a growing body of research confirms how HIV is and is not transmitted, there's still a great deal of fear based on misinformation and mistrust. The who, what, when, and how of HIV education are all issues that need to be thoroughly explored and discussed before implementing an HIV program.

Why Are Teenagers at Risk?

Adolescents are considered a high risk group because (1) they're exploring their sexual identities and often are experimenting not only with sex but with drugs; (2) their behavior tends to be impulsive and greatly influenced by peer pressure; and (3) they often feel invulnerable and have trouble seeing long-term consequences. McCormick reports that one out of every five cases of AIDS has occurred among those 20-29 or younger, and because of the long incubation period we now believe that many of these young people were infected as adolescents. Changing the behavior of adolescents, says epidemiologist Helene Gayle (McCormick), is going to make a big difference. Thus the goal of HIV education, according to Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines (Dennis Tolsma and others 1988), is to prevent infection through behavior changes.

What Should Be Taught When?

Most critics of HIV education support instruction, but often not at the elementary level. However, many young children have fears about AIDS, and the Surgeon General's report on AIDS stresses the need to educate children at an early age. Mainly they need to be reassured that even though AIDS is a serious disease, it's hard to get.

Most educators believe that specific instruction should begin no later than grade 7 (the age at which many kids are either starting to experiment with sex and drugs—or thinking about it). However, unless your state has a mandated curriculum, the age at which children should learn explicit facts about HIV infection may vary, depending on your community.

Controversy also centers around the issue of stressing abstinence only—or the "Just Say No" approach. The CDC thinks that the "Just Say No" approach isn't enough, especially for those teenagers who, no matter what you say, won't abstain from drugs or sex. The 1988 Gallup Poll revealed overwhelming support for schools to teach "safe sex" as a means of preventing HIV transmission (McCormick).

Both the National School Boards Association (NSBA) and the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) were consulted on the development of the CDC guidelines for comprehensive K-12 education. Most educators agree that one-shot programs are acceptable only if there's no other way for students to get information on HIV infection. As family life educator Clair Scholz puts it: "Most kids don't get it the first time" (McCormick). She thinks the study of HIV prevention would be like the study of U.S. history—taught repeatedly and extending knowledge as students become more sophisticated in their understanding. McCormick lists questions to ask in selecting and evaluating the many curricula currently available (as well as pros and cons on developing your own) and also includes an extensive list of resources, plus information on the CDC's computerized database.

Who Should Teach It—and In What Department?

The CDC guidelines recommend using regular classroom teachers at the elementary level. But with secondary programs most educators, along with the CDC, advocate integrating HIV education into health education. William Yarber (1987) says that HIV infection is fundamentally a public health problem, so the most logical place for it is in the communicable disease unit of a health course: "Such placement makes sense pedagogically because health educators are prepared in methods to help students make wise preventive health decisions, which is the essence of AIDS education." If the program is placed in biology, he fears too much emphasis will be placed on biomedical aspects, or if in social studies, on the social/ethical elements. Also, health education teachers are generally more comfortable dealing with the issues of sexuality and death.

But there are other options. Some school systems use family life specialists, science teachers, or home economics departments; in other districts classes are taught by health professionals, such as nurses, physicians, or the Red Cross. Several states have linked HIV education with teen pregnancy prevention

By Lynn Balster Liontos

*Actually the term AIDS (the clinical stage of the disease) has become obsolete; HIV infection (the state of being infected with the human immunodeficiency virus) more accurately defines the problem; thus this term will be used here on.

programs. Finally, the use of peers has been a significant part of HIV programs in some districts. "Peers are much more effective at altering each other's behavior than teachers or other adults," says Dr. Mervyn Silverman ("Issue Scan" 1989).

What About Teacher Training?

Both Katherine E. Keough (1988) and McCormick recommend educating all staff—with emphasis on inservice for teachers—before students receive classroom instruction. Staff training might be accomplished through local or state health departments, local hospitals, or a health education specialist. Other questions: Should staff be trained before curriculum decisions are made, or after? Or should they be provided with general HIV education and then specific training once materials are chosen? How will up-to-date information be continually provided?

No matter who is trained to teach HIV education, CDC guidelines emphasize that schools have a responsibility to reach all school-age youth. Groups often overlooked include special education students, those who don't speak English, and dropouts or runaways. The latter are usually best reached by working with local youth-oriented agencies. Finally, schools also need to educate parents and the whole community so that they reinforce what schools are teaching.

How Can Controversy Be Avoided or Dealt With?

Develop policies beforehand; don't adopt a "wait and see" approach. There are no foolproof ways for school boards to avoid controversy, says McCormick, but if it's anticipated and planned for, controversy can be managed and constructive.

Focus on process. The process of policy development, for instance, can help resolve disagreements and build consensus and support for HIV education.

Involve the whole community. "Many educators agree that HIV education is more easily accepted," says McCormick, "when the curriculum, materials and activities are developed locally, with the community's needs and values in mind." Do assessments of what your community needs and who's at risk, then work with parents and other groups, including clergy, to reach consensus.

Educate the public. Many school systems credit well-planned public information programs with helping to usher in HIV education without incidence. There are many ways to do this, including community information meetings, letters to parents about HIV and how HIV fits into the curriculum, working with grass-roots organizations, and inviting the community to participate on advisory committees to develop HIV education programs.

Hone your public relations skills. "We think AIDS is the biggest public relations problem we've ever encountered," says National School Public Relations Association Executive Director John Wherry (McCormick). McCormick suggests developing short- and long-range plans for HIV instruction, appointing one spokesperson to deal with press and public inquiries and letting parents, staff, and the community know that curriculum materials are available for review.

Give people time to adjust. Just getting people to talk about HIV education is a first step. You can't reach all the community groups, parents, and teachers and get the kind of support you need to implement a really successful program overnight, says Ableson: "We learn day by day what is needed."

Is it worth it? Can HIV education really be effective? A study on school health education suggests it is (McCormick). Also, comprehensive health education has been effective in reducing smoking—and several programs report success in reducing teen pregnancies. As Harvey Fineberg (1988) sums up: "The best we can do in AIDS education offers no guarantee of success. To do less invites failure."

Resources

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Number 38, 1989

ALTERNATIVES TO STANDARDIZED EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

An American educator who was examining the British educational system once asked a headmaster why so little standardized testing took place in British schools. "My dear fellow," came the reply, "In Britain we are of the belief that, when a child is hungry, he should be fed, not weighed." This anecdote suggests the complementary question: "Why is it that we do so *much* standardized testing in the United States?"

What Are the Main Uses of Standardized Testing in American Public Schools?

Advocates of standardized testing assert that it simply achieves more efficiently and fairly many of the purposes for which grading and other traditional assessment procedures were designed. Even critics of standardized testing acknowledge that it has filled a vacuum. As Grant Wiggins (1989a) puts it, "Mass assessment resulted from legitimate concern about the failure of schools to set clear, justifiable, and consistent standards to which it would hold its graduates and teachers accountable."

Standardized testing is currently used to fulfill (1) the *administrative* function of providing comparative scores for individual students so that placement decisions can be made; (2) the *guidance* function of indicating a student's strengths or weaknesses so that he or she may make appropriate decisions regarding a future course of study; and, more recently, (3) the *accountability* function of using student scores to assess the effectiveness of teachers, schools, and even entire districts (Robinson and Craver 1989).

What Problems Have Arisen as a Result of Widespread Use of Standardized Testing?

The phrase "test-driven curriculum" (Livingston, Castle, and Nations 1989) captures the essence of the major controversy surrounding standardized testing. When test scores are used on a comparative basis not only to determine the educational fate of individual students, but also to assess the relative "quality" of teachers, schools, and school districts, it is no wonder that "teaching to the test" is becoming a common practice in our nation's schools. This would not necessarily be a problem if standardized tests provided a comprehensive, indepth assessment of the knowledge and skills that indicate mastery of a given subject matter. However, the main purpose of standardized testing is to *sort* large numbers of students in as efficient a manner as possible. This limited goal, quite naturally, gives rise to short-answer, multiple-choice questions. When tests are constructed in this manner, active skills, such as writing, speaking, acting, drawing, constructing, repairing, or any of a number of other skills that can and should be taught in schools are automatically relegated to a second-class status.

What Alternatives to Standardized Testing Have Been Suggested?

It is reasonable to assume that the demand for test results that can be compared across student populations will remain strong. The critical question is whether such results can be obtained from tests that attempt a more comprehensive assessment of student abilities than the present standardized tests are capable of providing. An ancillary, but equally critical, question is whether such tests are too costly to be widely administered.

Suggested alternatives are based on the concept of a "performance-based" assessment. Depending on the subject matter being tested, the performance may consist of demonstrating any of the active skills mentioned above. For example, in the area of writing, drawing, or any of the "artistic expression" skills, it has been suggested that a "portfolio assessment," involving the ongoing evaluation of a cumulative collection of creative works, is the best approach (Wolf 1989). For subjects that require the organization of facts and theories into an integrated and persuasive whole (for example, sciences and social sciences), an assessment modelled after the oral defense required of doctoral candidates has been suggested (Wiggins 1989a).

A third approach, which might be termed the "problem solving model," can be adapted to almost any knowledge-based discipline. It involves the presentation of a problematic scenario that can be resolved only through the application of certain major principles (theories, formulae) that are central to the discipline under examination (Archbald and Newmann 1988).

Can Performance-Based Assessments Be Used to Compare Students Across Different Settings?

Performance-based assessment is more easily scored using a criterion-referenced, rather than a norm-referenced approach. Instead of placing a student's score along a normal distribution of scores from students all taking the same test, a criterion-referenced approach focuses on whether a student's performance meets a criterion level, normally reflecting mastery of the skills being tested.

How can such an assessment be reliably compared to similar assessments made by other teachers in other settings? It has been suggested that American educators adopt the "exemplary system" being called for in Great Britain. In this system, teachers involved in scoring meet regularly "to compare and balance results on their own and national tests" (Wiggins 1989b), thus increasing reliability across settings. Clearly, however, such an approach (similar to the approach currently in use for the

By Bruce C. Bowers

scoring of Advanced Placement essay exams) could be prohibitively expensive if carried out on a large scale. A key question is whether the costs associated with this labor intensive scoring system would be offset by the presumed instructional gains obtained from an assessment model that rewarded a more thorough and holistic approach to instruction.

Have There Been Any Statewide Efforts to Provide Alternatives to Standardized Testing?

California has probably made the greatest effort in this direction, beginning in 1987 with its statewide writing test and continuing with its current development of performance-based assessment in science and history (Massey 1989). The Connecticut Assessment of Educational Progress Program uses a variety of performance tasks in its assessment of science, foreign languages, and business education (Baron 1989). (However, this assessment includes only a sample of students at any given grade level, and, in addition, every year there is change in the subjects for which performance tasks are required.) Vermont education officials are currently seeking legislative approval for funds to pursue a portfolio assessment approach in addition to the current standardized testing (Massey 1989).

What Is the Prognosis for a General Shift Away from Standardized Testing and Toward Performance-Based Testing?

In pyschometric terms, the tradeoff in such a shift is to sacrifice reliability for validity. That is, performance-based tests do not lend themselves to a cost- and time-efficient method of scoring that, in addition, provides reliable results. On the other hand, they actually test what the educational system is presumably responsible for teaching, namely, the skills prerequisite for performing in the real world. The additional costs involved in producing reliable results across different settings for performance-based tests are unknown.

The question is whether a majority of educators will echo the sentiments of George Madaus, director of the Center for the Study of Testing, Evaluation, and Educational Policy, who believes that performance-based testing "is not efficient; it's expensive; it doesn't lend itself to mass testing with quick turnaround time—but it's the way to go" (Brandt 1989).

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Number 40, 1989

BACKGROUND CHECKS ON SCHOOL PERSONNEL

It's relatively simple to check on the basic professional competency of someone applying to work at your school. Applicants typically come with a trail of credentials, licenses, and employer references. But how do you make sure that your professionally competent teacher or bus driver is also morally competent? School districts differ greatly in how thorough they are in responding to this question (Richard Titus and Carol DeFrances 1989).

What Are the Issues?

Of more than 230,000 cases of child abuse in 1984, just a little more than 200 involved school employees (Sally Banks Zakariya 1988). Given that kind of record, many lawmakers and educators emphasize applicant privacy rights in the investigation of potential employees. The National Education Association, for instance, has a policy asserting "the right to be free from fingerprinting as a condition of employment." Also of high concern is the worry that a person "not be punished twice for the same crime."

Others point to the potential for harmful behaviors in addition to child abuse—for instance, those that might derive from a pattern of drug abuse or inappropriate fiscal management—and argue that no effort can be considered too much when the well-being of children is involved. However individuals stand on this issue, district size appears to be a major determinant of how carefully schools screen employees (Titus and DeFrances). Smaller districts rely more on references and informal sources. Larger systems tend to use bureaucratized procedures, including criminal record checks. These districts are more apt to allow employees to start working before all the checking is concluded and may have more difficulty in detecting and rejecting unsuitable applicants.

On a broader scale, Richard Schromm (telephone interview, July 1990), president-elect of the American Association of School Personnel Administrators and associate superintendent of personnel services, Santa Clara (California) County Office of Education, reports that the issue of "wrongful discharge"—when for any reason you fire someone shortly after hiring them because your initial screening failed—is a major concern of personnel administrators today.

What Are the District's Liabilities?

In a report for the American Society for Personnel Administration, Michael Lotito and Margaret Bryant (1988) sum up the twin problems of background checks: "Say too much, and risk a lawsuit; ask too little, and risk a lawsuit."

If you "say too much" when asked about an employee, you can be liable for defamation, which *Black's Law Dictionary* defines as "the offense of injuring a person's character, fame, or reputation by false and malicious statements." Defamation actions require that "hurtful statements" be "published" to another person—for example, to a prospective employer. Citing legal action taken by employees who were fired for reasons other than those officially listed in their personnel records, Lotito and Bryant urge accuracy in all employee evaluations: "Truth is a complete defense to a charge of defamation."

If you "ask too little" when checking on a person, you can open yourself to a negligent hiring charge. A third party, such as a parent, can sue the district if employees are hired without thorough background checks and then commit a crime of any sort. This issue received attention from a U.S. district court in a Cleveland, Oklahoma, case. The court ruled that the school district had failed to investigate the background of a teacher who was hired with a molestation conviction on his record and then convicted of a second sexual abuse charge while working for the district (David Splitt 1988).

The case hinged on evidence that a relative of the teacher had telephoned the district to warn that the teacher had "pedophile tendencies." Lawyers for the parents of the boys involved argued successfully that the district "showed a willful disregard or a deliberate indifference" to the students' safety. The district is appealing the case on the basis of the "limited duty of school officials"—Oklahoma has no laws requiring background investigations on persons who otherwise meet the qualifications for the jobs they are seeking.

What Can You Do to Be Careful?

Many states have made FBI checks mandatory for teacher certification. Some, like California, require fingerprint checks of applicants for all school positions. The existence of this requirement, Schromm has found, discourages persons with more serious offenses on their records. If FBI checks are not mandatory, Zakariya recommends checking local police records. The police have the option of initiating FBI checks should they or the school officials have any question. Also check the registries of known child abusers that most states maintain.

Lotito and Bryant offer advice on how to protect against both defamation and negligent hiring: Scrupulously keep copies of supporting documentation and make sure all oral or written statements about former employees relate strictly to work issues. When employees leave, obtain permission to give information to potential employers who may request it. The permission should include a release from all claims that might arise from giving such references

Route all inquiries to professionals trained in the legal constraints on releasing information. Respond only to requests from persons who have clearly

By Alan Baas

identified who they are and what their needs are for such information.

To protect against hiring negligence, obtain as many references as possible and check them carefully. Document the investigation, including each time you request a reference. Be thorough when interviewing and take complete notes, including explanations from the applicant for all gaps in employment history.

Ask if an applicant "has ever been convicted of a crime." (That information is public record and cannot be construed as invasion of privacy.) Give the applicant a chance to respond in advance to any controversial data that might arise from checking with a former employer. Have applicants sign release forms allowing the district to obtain information from former employers. In those states where employees have access to their own personnel files, ask them to request those files.

In checking references, Schromm suggests "seeking out those not listed as references who might know something about the applicant."

What Are the Key Points to Identify in Policy Statements?

A joint statement by the American Association of School Administrators and the National Association of State Boards of Education offers the following guidelines for dealing with employees and events relating to the sexual abuse of children:

- Each state should routinely check for criminal convictions and review its statutes to clearly identify the authority and procedures relating to complaints and hearings, penalties and prosecution, and issues of rehabilitation and reinstatement.
- Local written policies should apply to all school employees, center on the problem of child abuse, and not be used to regulate employee sexual preferences.
- Clearly explain for parents and students how the reporting and handling of allegations regarding sexual abuse will proceed.
- Define the rights and responsibilities of all parties, including how the school will relate to social services and criminal justice systems.
- Provide for procedural due process to protect employee rights.
- When employees are allowed to resign and no criminal proceedings initiated, records should reflect both the resignation and the circumstances surrounding it. Also, should the employee successfully complete a counseling treatment program, that information should also be included in the file.

Where Can You Go for Help?

The Teacher Identification Clearinghouse, maintained by the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC), provides a nationwide database of teachers whose certifications have been denied, revoked, or suspended over the past ten years. States, not individual districts, join the clearinghouse, which distributes a monthly update of the names, known aliases, birth dates, and Social Security numbers of all persons whose certification was withheld by member states. As of July 1990, according to NASDTEC Executive Director Donald Hair (telephone interview 1990), forty-two states had signed clearinghouse agreements. When someone applies to your district, check with your state offices to find out if that person is listed by the clearinghouse.

If the position is particularly important, consider spending the extra money to use a company specializing in checking credentials. Keep in mind, Zakariya cautions, that such companies legally may be considered your agents. For positions with financial responsibility, run consumer credit checks on applicants.

If you have to do all your own checking, a comprehensive handbook, *The Guide to Background Investigations* (Richard Long 1989), outlines the procedures for obtaining criminal, court, workers' compensation, education, and driving records. Published by the National Employment Screening Services (NESS), the guide describes how to go about checking records and gives each state's policies regarding information access. Details include the procedures, contacts, telephone and fax machine numbers, costs, and turnaround times for each type of record checking. State cross-reference listings let you backtrack from a city to the county that controls its criminal records.

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CENSORSHIP OF CURRICULUM MATERIALS

What schools should teach and what materials they should use are fundamental questions that cannot be easily answered in a democracy. Some believe censorship of K-12 curriculum materials threatens academic freedom, diversity of thought, and other important educational values. For example, Henry Reichman (1988) argues that censors "produce a sterile conformity and a lack of intellectual and emotional growth in students." Others see a need for a censorship process in education and believe "children are being harmed from our failure to protect them from the tension of premature adulthood" (Edward Wynne 1985).

A comprehensive report published by the National School Boards Association (Linda Chion-Kenney 1988) indicates that censorship challenges are widespread (occurring in almost every state) and effective (almost one-third of them resulted in materials being removed from schools or their use restricted). Ultimately, Chion-Kenney asserts, "the challenge is not to avoid censorship, but to meet it head on with adequate policies and procedures that provide an open forum for deciding what should — or should not — take place in public schools."

What Constitutes Censorship?

The definition of *censorship* is itself the subject of disagreement. In a democracy, it is customary for decisions to be made by majority rule. How can those who hold to minority viewpoints seek to have their concerns addressed by the schools without being labeled "censors"? Likewise, how is the professional judgment (and at the secondary level, academic freedom) of educators to be weighed against the desires of the community and parents that their children not be exposed to certain materials or experiences?

Reichman defines *censorship* as "the removal, suppression, or restricted circulation of literary, artistic or educational materials . . . on the grounds that these are morally or otherwise objectionable in the light of standards applied by the censor." Yet, as Chion-Kenney points out, "virtually any decision made by school board members concerning what is taught, used, and learned in school can be viewed as the act of a censor."

Meanwhile, out in the field, censorship issues continue to arise, most typically regarding sex and drug education; "secular humanism" materials; teaching evolution without attention to creationism; literature portraying children in conflict with parents or authorities, women in nontraditional roles, or "negative thinking" by people in minority or alienated roles; and "invasions of privacy" — any assignments (such as journals) in which students are asked to examine their personal backgrounds.

What Is the Relationship Between Censorship and Selection?

According to one point of view, censorship cannot be clearly distinguished from the gatekeeping function that is exercised by those who select materials for use in schools. One of the goals of selection, say adherents of this position, is that of protecting children from material judged to be inappropriate. "It is right," argues Wynne, "for us to restrict their choices among media materials or prohibit self-seeking adults from selling certain such materials." Others question the wisdom of excluding topics from guided discussion at school when students are exposed to a barrage of information about controversial subjects through other sources, such as the media.

To prevent selection decisions from becoming synonymous with endorsement of content, they should be guided by sound, clearly stated policy. "Intelligent selection," according to Reichman, should balance the concerns of a wide variety of groups and be carried out by trained professionals who "take into account and work with community and parental concerns" and maintain "a high tolerance for our national diversity." The selection process favors majority involvement; when it either disregards or fails to allow for minority rights, censorship issues make their appearance.

What Are the Legal Guidelines?

The legal trends in censorship issues, as they can be deduced from Supreme Court cases, are very broad and tend to support the schools, but they embody a stern warning to educators to stay in touch with the communities they are supposed to be serving.

The First Amendment applies to both "the students' rights to know and the teachers' rights to academic freedom," says Edward Jenkinson (1986). But parents also, he argues, "have the right to protest," particularly regarding materials they consider detrimental to their children or unsuitable for students in general.

In the landmark case *Island Trees Union Free High School v. Pico* (1982), the Court ruled that the school board had to give a legitimate reason for removing a number of books from its library. Six years and three court battles later, the banned books were returned to the shelves after the Court declared that the "Constitution does not permit the official suppression of ideas" (Barbara Parker and Stefanie Weiss 1983, Jenkinson 1986).

While the courts appear to be allowing schools broad discretion with respect to curriculum materials, methods, and programs, Franklyn Haiman (1987) points out that "there are limits to this discretion. It is not permissible to promote politically partisan or narrow ideological views, it must not violate contractual obligations, and it must basically respect due

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process rights of both students and teachers." Thus, in the *Pico* case, Justice Brennan's plurality opinion indicated that the use of "established, regular, and facially unbiased procedures for the review of controversial materials" would help to provide a basis for resolving such conflicts both locally and, when need be, in the courts.

How Can School Officials Avoid Controversy?

Good internal communications and public relations offer the best way to avoid unnecessary controversy. Districts need sound written policies, procedures, and criteria that are "developed cooperatively by teachers, administrators and school board members, with formal approval given by the Board" (Haiman).

The district must specify criteria for making curriculum judgments, identify personnel to make those decisions, and provide written rationales for including or excluding potentially controversial materials. These policies should be reviewed yearly. Broad support should be sought from local, state, and national organizations that are committed to academic freedom.

In developing community support, Larry Mikulecky (1981) suggests several strategies:

- Work to dispel the idea that only one text can be used for a specific skill or theme.
- Invite parents to participate in developing school reading programs.
- Give suggested, rather than required, reading lists.
- Develop files of professional reviews for the support of materials.
- Ask for clauses in collective bargaining agreements that protect academic freedom and require agreed-on selection policies and procedures.

When Controversy Occurs, How Can It Be Handled?

According to NSBA deputy general counsel Gwendolyn Gregory, a school board might win a case legally, "but lose it in the court of public opinion" (Chion-Kenney). She urges officials to "keep a distance" from their personal beliefs, concentrate on what is "educationally sound," and not get lost in trying to avoid legal problems. "You can't avoid lawsuits," Gregory says, "but you can avoid losing them." To do so, school boards need to gather the real facts in each situation: "Listen to people's complaints, follow up, don't accept as truth the conclusions of others, understand where they are coming from, and investigate."

Educators should follow clearly defined procedures from their initial response to the complaint through to its resolution (Haiman, Essex, Chion-Kenney):

- Meet with the complainant and try to resolve the issue informally.
- Failing that, ask for a written complaint specifying in detail (page citations, quotes, and so forth) the questionable material, the negative effects that material is believed to have on students, and what replacement materials are recommended.
- Provide a copy of published district policies for controversial materials and explain the procedures to be followed.
- Assign a review committee to provide the school board with a final report.
- Inform the complainant of the review process and when committee meetings are scheduled.
- Provide for an appeals process.
- While the complaint is being investigated, the controversial material should remain available, except possibly to the student whose family has filed an objection.

The courts have made it clear that the school board has the ultimate legal responsibility for the district (Haiman). School officials operate only with powers delegated to them by the board. Accordingly, school boards must stand ready to receive appeals in a careful and defined manner. Above all, the NSBA position (Chion-Kenney) is to think positively and maintain a strong faith in the democratic process. Handling complaints can help schools gain a balanced view on controversial issues. "As a check both on unavoidable human error and on the occasionally arbitrary exercise of authority, such challenges may be viewed as an essential element in the overall selection process."

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CHOICE IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

It is perhaps inevitable that a society based on individual freedom will have to contend with the pressure for broader choices in education. Participants and researchers are discovering that alternative educational programs generally reduce dropout rates, increase academic and personal satisfaction and achievement, provide real options for struggling students, and generate improvement on all levels in the schools.

What Issues Are Raised Regarding Choice Options Within and Outside the Public School System?

Two basic types of programs could potentially receive governmental funding: those in which families choose among various options within a public school or district, and those in which vouchers are used. A voucher system would award students the equivalent of their tax dollars to be applied toward tuition at a public or private school of their choice. School districts fear that the voucher system would siphon funds and students away from the public schools and into the private realm; the result could be heightened racial and class segregation.

"To assign parents full and unfettered responsibility for choosing their children's education in an open market," argues Mary Anne Raywid (1987), "is to telegraph the message that the matter is solely their affair and not the community's concern." Raywid contends that the perception of education as a public, as well as a private , good is crucial to the survival of public education. She warns that, as has happened in France, a voucher system could create a situation where private schools serve the affluent and public schools serve the poor. Lobbyists and special interest groups would then establish themselves around the private schools, thus making the voucher system impossible to reverse.

Keeping choice within the boundaries of the public school system, Raywid says, is the best way to preserve the democratic structure of education. Although different in form, options could be assured of offering an equivalent quality of education, maintaining class and ethnic balance, and providing a standardized, measurable knowledge base for all students.

What Are Some Characteristics of Public Alternative Programs?

Alternative school programs, Raywid tells us, consist of a distinct administrative unit, voluntary student and staff participation, responsiveness to particular needs or interests not served in the public core school, a structural design strongly influenced or established by local constituents, and a developmental format that encourages a broad range of student personal and academic skills.

In alternative programs, power tends to be more evenly distributed among students, teachers, and administrators. Curriculum is characterized by independent study and experiential learning. Many alternative programs offer greater autonomy, especially the freedom to withdraw from the program, which creates a relaxed, congenial environment and gives students a sense of control over and responsibility for their learning.

Such programs often encourage the development of humanistic values, decision-making skills, and self-awareness. The emphasis is usually on realizing individual potential rather than comparing individual achievement to group norms.

What Are Some Examples of Educational Options?

Alternative schools may differ from regular schools in their attendance policies, curriculum, size, materials, methods, location, organization, and/or regulations. Magnet schools, for example, are often organized around a theme, with all subjects revolving in relation to the core emphasis. A West Virginia school district, according to H. Lawrence Jones and Henry Marockie (1987), has initiated an open enrollment policy that allows parents to select the school within the district that best serves their children's needs. Brought together by common goals, constituents then work on developing an appropriate curriculum.

The self-directed learning and flexible attendance policies of Vancouver's Alternative Learning Center, according to Robert Fizzell (1987), allow students to work at their own pace and have changed the role of teacher from knowledge giver and enforcer to facilitator and counselor.

How Can Educators Implement and Manage Programs of Choice Within Their District?

Richard Elmore (1986) says policy-makers need to develop flexibility in determining aspects of finance, attendance, staff selection, and curriculum content. Alternative programs must serve both broad and individual goals, providing a measurable basic education within their autonomous structures. For example, policy-makers could, Elmore says, establish minimum standards in the areas of student-staff ratio, staff qualifications, study hours, performance expectations, and racial and economic balance. Fizzell recommends each alternative school provide the community with extensive information on its characteristics, screen applicants for compatibility, and thoroughly orient new members to the programs they select.

Charles Glenn (1988) suggests the following steps for implementation of alternative programs:

- conduct initial and ongoing parent surveys regarding teaching/learning styles, school climate, supplemental programs, content, character develop-

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ment, and willingness to commute; then use this information to design and improve programs
- provide adequate staff involvement and development
- make a commitment to parent outreach
- establish a fair, simple process for school assignment and appeals
- manage the impact on individual schools
- organize a transportation system

In addition, Joe Nathan (1988) advises listing skills and knowledge all students will be expected to acquire; making development funds available to teachers; establishing effective communication with parents; providing transportation, especially for low-income families; and ensuring that transfers and assignments do not discriminate on the basis of race, economic level, past behavior, academic achievement, or parental pressure.

What Potential Challenges May Arise as Schools Adopt Programs of Choice?

Opening the door to choice within the public school system promises to raise certain questions. Policy-makers, Nathan asserts, will need to closely monitor ethnic, sexual, and economic balances, as well as prevent the exclusive selection of high-performing students.

Fizzell warns that "students' study skills and background knowledge are weaker today than in the past, which makes independent study difficult for them. Their interests are immediate and practical; their concerns, narrow and personal." Similarly, Saul Cooperman (1988) cautions that economic pressure may make it difficult for parents to "make informed decisions or participate in the school." Also, increased funds may be needed to provide teacher training, transportation, discourse with the community, and coordination of the multiple programs.

Still, adequate planning, most educators seem to agree, can make program selection a practical, feasible, and mutually beneficial option for the public school system.

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COLLABORATION BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND SOCIAL SERVICES

The growing chasm between society's complex problems and what the systems, as presently configured, can do to help is driving reform in all sectors. So says *Joining Forces*, a report by the National Association of State Boards of Education (Janet Levy 1989) calling for joint action. "Schools alone cannot compensate for the disadvantage created by troubled homes and troubled communities," states Levy. "Welfare and social services may momentarily mitigate a crisis, but cannot hold a hopeful future to those who lack abilities demanded by the job market." One of the key changes needed to make reform work, say many experts, is collaboration between education and human service agencies.

Why Is Collaboration Mandatory?

"Using the schools to achieve racial balance, eliminate poverty, fight drug abuse, prevent pregnancy and reduce youth suicide is simply too much!" complains one educator (Dennis Rittenmeyer 1986). Over and over the *Joining Forces* staff heard the plea from both educators and human service workers, "We can't do it alone." The problems are simply too big and too complex.

Complex problems call for comprehensive services to the whole person and his or her community, says Lisbeth Schorr (Levy). Educators emphasize the importance of seeing the larger picture: That the child is part of a family, which is part of a community, and that they can't be separated. Nor can human services and education remain in separate categories. For one, they have overlapping administrative responsibilities and are mutually dependent on each other. "The goals that each system is setting for its own reform effort cannot be realized alone, but depend on complementary action by one or more sectors," says Levy. "Family crises and the conditions of poverty must be alleviated if children are able to concentrate in the classroom; children must succeed in the classroom if they are one day to support themselves and avoid long-term dependency."

Demographics also support collaboration, states Harold Hodgkinson (1989). For example, with metro areas crossing state lines, how do we deal with school districts that have allegiances to several states or cities? Or what about the link between education and crime? Eighty-two percent of America's prisoners are high school dropouts (Hodgkinson). Yet the cost of prisons is so astounding ($20,000 to maintain one prisoner for a year) that Hodgkinson says anything that keeps people out of prison, such as education, is an excellent long-term investment.

Finally, there are financial reasons. Hodgkinson doesn't see new funds for social programs forthcoming from government: "That being the case, we simply have to get more mileage out of the resources and organizations we now have." In fact, he stresses that we may be able to magnify the effectiveness of each dollar several times through interagency collaboration. For example, a dollar invested in Head Start saves you $7 in later services you don't need to provide (Hodgkinson). "Fully funding Head Start," he says, "would be the most cost effective way to reduce high school dropouts, welfare recipients, as well as astronomical jail costs."

On What Issues Should We Be Collaborating?

Joining Forces has launched a national effort to help education and human services work together to aid a targeted group: children and families at-risk. Of the children starting school in 1988, one in four was born into poverty, half a million were born to teen parents, and over half at some point will live with only one parent in households prone to poverty and stress (Levy). Add widespread substance abuse, inadequate health care, lack of affordable housing and you get families that often face many risks simultaneously, increasing the complexity of solutions.

Floyd Boschee (1989) also believes that if America is to develop a strong, competitive economy in an international market, quality public schooling will have to be provided to all children, including the disadvantaged.

The educational reform movement has generally not addressed the particular needs of disadvantaged students; in fact, it's made school success often harder for students already having difficulty.

Areas for collaboration, depending on age group, include health care, income support, social services for families, tutorial and remedial help, before- and after- school care, improved parental literacy and involvement, linkage between employment and education, and attendance policies that seek to retain rather than exclude.

How Can We Begin?

No one has all the answers, but here are ways to begin: (1) Study demographics, such as Hodgkinson's report, including demographics of your own community. (2) Go to joint conferences where structured dialogue between agencies is encouraged—or set up joint committee meetings, such as between education and health. (3) Make note of successful collaborative examples, both past and present. (4) In the beginning, pick an issue to collaborate on that's not on anyone's specific turf, such as teen pregnancy. (5) Involve key officials for inspiration and organizational backing; involve all key stakeholders, such as staff who work directly with the children; include neutral parties who can smooth out rough spots. (6) Watch for "categorical drift"—that is, each agency

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working on its own in isolation. (7) Encourage information-sharing among systems about children and families, and reward staff for working with others outside their own sector. (8) Stress prevention and early intervention; look for ways the school system can, in working with other agencies, strengthen families and communities. (9) Use effective team-building for shared control and decision-making; good communication is vital. (10) Focus on process; remember that collaboration is a means, not an end. (11) Set realistic time-frames; establish common goals to be implemented across agencies, with accountability spelled out. (12) Be willing to commit the necessary resources: successful collaboration takes time and energy.

What Has Collaboration Achieved to Date?

Joining Forces collected information nationwide about collaborative programs. These efforts are useful to study because they inform us about what works and how to build a base for collaboration. Two of the most important achievements that state and local collaborations have shown, according to Levy, are improvements in the delivery of existing services and the opportunity to provide new kinds of service, particularly to high-risk adolescents and communities.

Training, for example, is a major focus in Rockingham County, New Hampshire, where elementary teachers are trained by the Division of Children and Youth to recognize early signs that a child is in trouble. Locating services so they're readily accessible is another way of improving connections. Washington, D.C.'s Housing and Community Development Department and the D.C. Public Schools, for instance, have opened study rooms at two public housing complexes; teachers report that, as a result, children are showing improved study skills and turning in homework more reliably.

As an example of new kinds of services, Texas' Communities in Schools Program brings social service staff into the school where they work intensively with students at risk of dropping out. The result? The program reports it keeps 90 percent of its students in school. On the other hand, the Kent County, Michigan, Department of Social Services provides funds for outreach workers who follow up on attendance problems in early elementary grades—with the result of improved attendance for 90 percent of first graders.

How Can We Ensure Future Collaborative Success?

The first collaborative steps have been taken. Yet virtually no one is satisfied, says Levy, that collaboration has gone far enough. For one thing, many of the best examples aren't widely known and thus aren't frequently replicated. More importantly, even when successful programs are in place, the changes and lessons usually haven't been incorporated on a systemwide basis. Too often they're like "special projects"; substantive policy discussions and priority-setting across systems are rare.

Thus a broader view of collaboration is needed: "Collaboration must be not just a luxury set of ad hoc connections, but a core aspect of organizational thinking and individual thinking, reaching from the commitments made by top policymakers to the way individual teachers and social workers interact with children and families" (Levy). This requires fundamental systemic change—a restructuring of organizational configurations, policies, program content, training, financing, and management.

Can we do it? Certainly it means sacrificing (giving up turf and comfortable traditions, for one thing). But Schorr says the problems with families and children have emerged at the same time that twenty years of research have produced a critical mass of knowledge needed for taking action. We *do* know enough to help, she says: "The question is whether we are willing to bite the bullet and do it" (Levy).

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COPING WITH CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

Studying local and national population distribution, as well as economic and social patterns, is becoming crucial for educators who serve rapidly changing communities. School officials often must reacquaint themselves with their constituents and investigate ways to better meet the social, physical, and educational needs of their particular populations. Most significantly, across the country people are facing the challenge of living as multicultural citizens.

How Is the Ethnic Makeup of the Youth Population Changing?

Immigration, migration, and fertility patterns indicate that by the year 2010 about 38 percent of people under the age of 18 in the United States will be African, Asian, or Hispanic American. By that time, in seven states and the District of Columbia, more than one-half of the children will be minorities: Hawaii (80 percent), New Mexico (77 percent), California (57 percent), Texas (57 percent), New York (53 percent), Florida (53 percent), Louisiana (50 percent), District of Columbia (93 percent). In an additional nineteen states, Joe Schwartz and Thomas Exeter report (1989), at least one-fourth of the population will be either African, Hispanic, or Native or Asian American.

In the next decade, experts predict that most immigrants will arrive from Asia and Latin America. According to James P. Allen and Eugene J. Turner (1988), 90 percent of these immigrants will settle in metropolitan areas, with the largest numbers coming to New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago. Each area in the U.S., however, hosts its own unique cultural blend. Hispanic-Americans, for instance, tend to concentrate in California and Texas, while significant numbers of Asian Americans can be found living in western coastal cities; African-American communities are more strongly represented in the East and Southeast.

In studying such statistics, however, school officials should take into consideration the tremendous diversity in cultures, economic and family situations, and educational levels existing within each ethnic group.

What Social and Economic Patterns Characterize Today's Student Population?

Low-income, two-income, single-parent, and homeless families are all on the rise. Drug and alcohol abuse, pregnancy, suicide, and teenage dropout rates continue to challenge school districts. These conditions account for an increase in students designated as "at risk."

Twenty-three percent of U.S. children, concludes Harold Hodgkinson (1988), are growing up in one-parent families, 90 percent of which are headed by single females. According to Kathryn Keough (1986), 62 percent of single-parent families have annual incomes of less than $10,000.

Children account for 40 percent of the nation's poor, with nearly one-fourth of U.S. children living in poverty (Hodgkinson 1989). John Carey (1989), in tracing the shift of the nation's middle-class from urban to suburban locales and gentrified city centers, says that "the poor are being pushed into an expanding belt between the rich center city and the prosperous outer suburbs." Families with children, Donna Harrington-Luecker (1989) reports, comprise 34 percent of the nation's homeless. Rural people account for one-fourth of the population in homeless shelters. School district residency requirements and transportation problems make it difficult for homeless children to attend school on a regular basis.

By Amy Klauke

How Might School Officials Investigate Demographic Changes in Their District?

The number of students enrolled in a local public school varies as a result of changes in birth rate, migration patterns, and social conditions. The popularity of local private schools might also affect the number. Keough believes that by 1990 private schools will enroll 15 percent of the nation's elementary and secondary students. "Some kind of private school," she says, "now exists in virtually every town over 10,000 population."

Keough also claims that "dramatic regional differences in enrollment patterns can be expected for the remainder of the century." After brief increases, enrollment will most likely decline in the Northeast and Midwest, while in the West and parts of the South (notable California, Texas, Florida, and Arizona), it will rise significantly.

The birth rate in a specific area can be predicted, Thomas A. Glass (1987) notes, through studying:

- the number of women of childbearing age
- community expectations of family size
- past history of family planning efforts and abortion rates

Glass recommends comparing enrollments by grade level to establish migration rates. If a 1989 freshman class of 325 becomes a sophomore class of 300 in 1990, this indicates a loss of 25 students, or a 7.6 percent negative migration rate. Over time, consistent data collection can show approximately how many students a school district is gaining or losing, at what level, and during what time of year.

How Might School Districts Address the Shifting Cultural Makeup of Student Enrollments?

As the nation's ethnic diversity increases, schools will have to develop ways to create productive, multicultural environments to accommodate diverse

student backgrounds and native languages. Addressing the rise in multicultural classrooms requires commitment by school officials to second-language learners.

Issues of racism and ethnicity must be addressed. Teaching materials should be examined for racial, cultural, or gender biases. Only if students observe staff commitment to providing a fair, representative environment will they feel a sense of school ownership. Bilingual and special programs might need to be developed.

Teachers and staff should become familiar with the cultures represented in their classrooms while they promote an atmosphere of acceptance and cooperation. Forming integration teams is one way to provide a comprehensive study of multicultural classrooms. Some of the questions asked by members of a San Diego School District Integrated Monitoring Team ("Schools Focusing" 1989) include:

- Are all students actively involved in classroom instruction?
- Are classroom seating patterns racially balanced?
- Are reading materials provided in languages other than English for students who need them?
- Do notices on bulletin boards and in school publications reflect the ethnic makeup of the school?
- Are school clubs racially integrated?
- Are there overt signs of racism in the school?

Christine E. Sleeter and Carl A. Grant (1988) argue that the curriculum should be reformed so that it "regularly presents diverse perspectives, experiences, and contributions, particularly those that tend to be omitted or misrepresented."

How Might School Districts Address Changing Social Conditions?

A study of demographics suggests that the most urgent educational needs for the nation include comprehensive help to at-risk and low-achieving students. Believing that school performance is inextricably linked to social conditions, both David Snyder (1984) and Hodgkinson (1989) advocate a networking of services that attend to students' health, education, housing, legal, and transportation needs. Hodgkinson adds that special emphasis should be given to preventative measures such as providing adequate head-start programs, low-income housing, mass transit systems, health care and family counseling programs, and attention by the schools to low-achieving students.

Snyder recommends expanding early childhood development programs, child support services (health, nutrition, parenting, and language classes, for example) and the variety of teaching methods used in the classroom. To begin helping homeless children stay in school, Harrington-Lueker advises working closely with social service providers and homeless advocates as well as allowing for flexibility regarding administrative procedures.

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DRUG TESTING

The issue of drug testing in schools galvanizes emotions about both civil liberties and moral obligations. Our educational institutions must be committed to respect for student and staff privacy. Yet school administrators are feeling pressure to adopt urgent measures to keep drugs and alcohol from further endangering the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of our youth.

What Is the Current Status of Drug Use in the Schools?

The rate of drug use among teenagers is higher in the United States than in any other industrial society. Sixty-one percent of high school seniors have tried drugs (Lewis 1987), and 20 percent (3.3 million) of 14- to 17-year-olds have serious drinking problems. Drunk driving remains the primary cause of death among teenagers. Schools suffer from the subsequent loss of concentration, determination, and social skills among both students and staff members who are substance abusers.

Many school officials claim that their responsibility "to ensure that employees and students report fit for duty" (Lewis) obligates them to implement severe measures for the detection and punishment of drug users.

These claims are reinforced by a national anti-drug campaign and Congressional passage of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 and the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1986 (and 1989 amendments) tying institutional compliance to federal funding eligibility requirements. The 1989 legislation added $173 million for drug abuse prevention programs aimed at school districts in disadvantaged areas (Penning 1990).

What Legal Questions Arise When Schools Consider Drug Testing?

Drug testing raises issues that pertain to both the Fourth Amendment, which protects citizens from unreasonable search and seizure (judges have found drug testing to constitute such a search), and the Fourteenth Amendment, which requires that citizens be treated as innocent until proven guilty and be accorded due process of law when accused.

In *Patchogue-Medford Congress of Teachers v. Union Free School District*, the state appellate panel held that "there must be some degree of suspicion before the dignity and privacy of a teacher may be compromised by forcing the teacher to undergo a urine test." In other words, there must be a "factual basis" for suspecting a particular teacher of using illegal drugs. Paradoxically, such an accumulation of evidence would usually preclude the necessity for testing body fluids. The court did concede that drug testing restrictions may soften in situations where an employee's substance use might endanger the public.

In two 1989 cases (*Skinner v. Railway Labor Executives Association* and *National Treasury Employees Union v. Von Rabb*) involving public employees, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that public safety interests outweighed privacy and "individualized suspicion" requirements (Sendor 1989). These "special needs" cases may have implications for policies concerning school employees with "diminished expectations of privacy," such as school bus drivers (Allred 1989).

In *Odenheim v. Carlstadt-East Rutherford Regional School District*, the court held that drug testing as a part of mandatory physical exams was "an attempt to control student discipline under the guise of medical procedure." Attempts to pretest athletes raise the issue of whether extracurricular activities are rights or privileges.

In *Schail v. Tippecanoe County School Corporation* (1988), a federal district court ruled that a drug analysis program for student athletes was justified by the school's "legitimate need to ensure drug-free athletes" (Gittins 1988). In this ruling, participation in interscholastic athletics was considered a privilege, not a "property" or "liberty" interest protected by the Fourteenth Amendment—especially since the testing program preserved confidentiality, lacked criminal repercussions, and prohibited sports participation only after repeated offenses.

Because metabolisms differ, and results are influenced by the time and amount ingested, urinalysis and breathilizer tests inaccurately reflect an individual's use or abuse of a controlled substance, particularly marijuana. Instances can occur, as in *Jones v. McKenzie*, in which a positive urinalysis test cannot be confirmed by an alternative testing method.

According to Eugene A. Lincoln's (1989) analysis of three hypothetical cases, school officials have no authority or responsibility to regulate offcampus conduct with "no bearing on the proper maintenance of the educational process." A student's observed conduct on school premises is more important than where that student used marijuana or other drugs. Mandatory urinalysis should be based only on individualized suspicion and should satisfy both prongs (reasonable suspicion and appropriate circumstances) of the *T.L.O. v. New Jersey* test for search and seizure constitutionality. School administrators would also be wise to use less intrusive measures, such as searching a suspected student's locker or personal belongings.

How Might Drug Testing Be Applied in a Fair, Economical, and Legally Safe Manner?

Although any testing procedure risks charges of defamation, invasion of property, infliction of emotional distress, or wrongful discharge, several

By Amy Klauke and revised by Margaret Hadderman

precautions can reduce the dangers for schools determined to test constituents for drug use.

Extensive involvement (including education about drug and alcohol abuse) by parents, community, school board members, teachers, staff, and students in planning a drug policy goes a long way toward preventing future court cases. Voluntary, nondisciplinary procedures should be encouraged, with rules and punitive actions clearly and publicly stated. Advice from a school board's legal counsel is recommended before implementation.

Prescreening and, when evidence warrants, individualized testing by a reliable, independent medical agency remain the least objectionable methods of testing for substance abuse. Positive results should be proceeded by followup tests, hearings, reviews held within a reasonable timespan, and punitive or rehabilitative measures.

How Might Drug Testing Affect Student Attitudes?

For some students, testing followed by nonpunitive, rehabilitative action may come as a respite from out-of-control behavior. As Brian Mittman (1987) asserts, "Teenagers who are weak enough to fall victim to drug abuse generally are incapable of dealing with it." Others may appreciate the removal of temptation.

On the other hand, most adolescents grow through a period of reshaping identity, experimenting, challenging, and taking risks. What might have been passing curiosity or mild rebellion should not be construed as evidence of deviance in character. A negative public image can irreparably damage a teenager's self-identity and self-esteem.

What Are Some Alternatives to Drug Testing in the Schools?

According to Michael Buscemi (1985), "research has demonstrated repeatedly that short-term programs and those that rely exclusively on information about drugs and alcohol are not effective." Effective policies tend to be both preventative and ameliorative, long-term and comprehensive. They involve curriculum and sometimes organizational changes and are nourished by a broad base of input and support.

Many authorities believe youthful substance abuse is symptomatic of high stress and a dearth of coping skills. Schools might alleviate the motivation for substance abuse by strengthening students' personal skills and peer support systems, providing appealing extracurricular activities, emphasizing health promotion, and encouraging drug-free lifestyles among their staff and student bodies.

Adult examples of positive stress management and body care can contribute significantly to a student's cultivation of similar life habits. So can celebrity testimonies and classroom discussions probing the glamorization of alcohol and drugs by the popular media.

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EMERGING ISSUES IN STATE-LEVEL SCHOOL FINANCE

Almost two decades have passed since the state role in funding schools became a major education policy issue. After years of dormancy, the controversy is heating up again. The evidence nationally is very thin, but what is available indicates that states have made little progress in reducing wealth-related expenditure disparities among school districts (Schwartz and Moskowitz 1988).

Over the last twenty-four months, nearly half of the states have been somehow engaged in debate about the fairness and/or constitutionality of their school finance systems. At last count, thirteen were engaged in or about to launch investigations of their funding formulas, usually at the behest of a legislative or executive branch task force. Eleven states are presently at various stages of involvement with the courts, ranging from early hearings to "pending decision" status in the state's highest court. (For a review of school finance litigation, see LaMorte 1989.)

Three state finance systems were ruled unconstitutional early in the 1980s (Arkansas, West Virginia, and Wyoming) and four in the last twenty-four months (Kentucky, Montana, New Jersey, and Texas). It seems that America has yet to break the link between local wealth and the quality of a child's education.

What Issues Surround the Property Tax?

A key source of revenue for the public schools, the local property tax is the subject of regular debate in school finance. It is part of the general concern over sources of revenue for the public schools. Some say that property taxes should be abandoned as a source of revenue for schools. The argument is that taxing property is inefficient and unfair, as the value of one's home or business is not realized until it is sold. Property tax opponents suggest that income is the more appropriate measure of local wealth; it is what people use to pay their taxes.

Proponents of local property taxes call for the improved administration of this tax. Property taxes, it is argued, are as good a measure of fiscal capacity as income or any other measure of wealth, perhaps even easier to measure. Because property taxes are much less subject to short-term fluctuations in economic activity than sales or income tax receipts, they are considered reliable as a source of revenue for schools. Proponents further argue that property tax circuit breakers can be used to prevent an unfair burden on the poor or fixed income taxpayers. Expect the debate over appropriate sources of revenue for schools to continue. If school costs rise significantly during the 1990s, it will place continuing pressure on policy makers at the state and local levels to find new revenue for schools.

What Are Other Reasons for the Focus on School Finance?

The property tax is not the only reason for this renewed interest in school finance at the state level. Most state aid systems are old, the majority of the basic formulas for distributing aid to school districts having been designed and implemented in the early to mid-1970s. As we enter the 1990s, much has changed. Enrollments—stable in the early 1970s and declining during the middle 1970s and 1980s—are now growing again in some parts of the country. Land values, particularly in agricultural states, are stable to declining, placing upward pressure on local tax rates. The program and service requirements of schools have changed also, particularly regarding the programs and services associated with various special student populations. There are many reasons why school funding formulas might need significant reform to bring them in line with the times.

A decade of emphasis on making qualitative improvements in the schools at the state and local levels may also explain the new focus on school finance. Efforts to raise graduation requirements, mandate expanded student testing and assessment, increase teacher salaries, and require new services for students (for example, early childhood, dropout prevention, employment training) have amplified concerns about the cost of education and highlighted existing differences in the resources from district to district.

Fuhrman, Clune, and Elmore (1988) concluded, in their review of state education reform initiatives, that the performance of state school finance systems (for example, their ability to provide equal resources) affects local ability to respond to education reform initiatives. Rosenholtz's (1988) research on initiatives designed to establish minimum competency standards for students and career ladder programs for teachers confirms that money is an important factor in the successful implementation of these initiatives. Research evidence, limited though it may be, suggests that providing adequate revenue in an equalized way is key to school improvement initiatives around the country.

How Does School Restructuring Affect School Finance?

Complicating matters are several important themes running through the restructuring debate of the late 1980s and early 1990s. One has to do with *enhancing the institutional competence of schools*. This appears to mean a number of things — fostering the professional growth of teachers, providing time and structures that allow school staff to pay more attention to problems of teaching and learning, and allowing school staff, particularly teachers, to play a greater role in the day-to-day operation of schools.

By Kent McGuire
University of Colorado at Denver

Another theme has to do with *decision-making and governance in schools*. A popular viewpoint is that schools are in the best position to decide how to use the resources at their disposal to meet school- and system-wide objectives. Schools should decide which services to purchase (such as testing or curriculum specialists) from the central district or from other sources and should determine their staffing needs and how to fill them. A key finance issue is the "fair share" of resources (in dollars) that are controlled at the school site. Should building administrators receive the monetary equivalent of their current staff allocations? How are the relative needs of schools determined and quantified so decentralization does not create intradistrict disparities in resources and opportunity?

Finally, restructuring seems to involve a basic *shift in the incentive structure that drives behavior and resource allocation in schools*. For most reformers, this means developing new forms of and mechanisms for accountability. It has been suggested that schools should develop assessment strategies designed to measure problem solving and cognitive development. Rewards and sanctions, it is argued, should be linked to these "robust" outcome measures so that the consequences of success and failure are clear and direct. There are many questions. How many of the rewards and sanctions involve money? If the high achieving schools are wealthy and the low achieving schools poor, how is the wealth-related difference in performance to be addressed — through rewards and sanctions or structural change in the finance formula? What are the costs of school-centered assessment instruments and strategies?

What Are Implications for Local Policy Makers?

There is little doubt that the traditional school finance equity issues — measuring educational needs and assessing the relative fiscal capacity of school districts — will receive attention in the 1990s as policy makers calibrate their finance systems to changing economic and demographic conditions and accommodate the new programs and standards implemented during the 1980s. School boards and administrators will need to assist state policy makers in appropriately defining the needs of schools in the new decade, helping to translate these needs into mechanisms that create fair and adequate distributions of resources.

Of course, education policy making in the 1980s has created new equity issues. We can expect policy makers at all levels to be held accountable not just for providing equal dollars per child but for (1) the distribution of excellent (master/lead) teachers; (2) access to curricular offerings and instructional experiences; and (3) the availability of high-quality facilities and instructional materials. When patterns emerge between inequities in these resources and variables like district size, location, student characteristics, and wealth, state school finance laws are sure to be challenged. Local officials must pay attention to the impact of these reform initiatives *within* district boundaries. Unequal distributions among schools within districts may also be challenged.

Finally, school boards and administrators must participate aggressively in the continuing debate on restructuring and education accountability. Recent developments in states like Kentucky, New Jersey, and Texas underscore the growing link between the allocation of resources and the use of those resources at the local level. Pressure to relate money to student outcomes may grow. Efforts to redefine power and authority relationships governing the allocation and use of resources will continue under the heading of "site-based decision-making" or related initiatives. The traditional school finance linkages between funding and local practice are already changing. Observe how fully funded state programs/mandates are giving way to "fiscal incentives" and other approaches for sharing fiscal responsibility for state education policy goals. Because many districts felt constrained by undue regulations, it is now popular to grant flexibility in the use of existing funds in lieu of providing "new" money. In the absence of clear knowledge about the success or appropriate use of these strategies, it behooves local leaders to frame local priorities carefully and to use skill in interpreting the objectives of state policy makers as they legislate in this area.

What Questions Still Need to Be Resolved?

The current policy debate in education does raise some interesting questions in school finance:

What are the costs of restructuring the public schools? Can the schools be substantially improved without a significant infusion of resources? How do school finance formulas interact with attempts to manage resources at the school site? Will restructuring and site-based management force states to develop a new generation of funding mechanisms? To what extent can incentives and sanctions be used in a state funding formula?

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For more information, contact Kent McGuire, University of Colorado at Denver. The address: School of Education, 1200 Larimer Street, Box 106, Denver, Colorado 80204. (303) 556-4495.

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EVALUATING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Program evaluation has long been a useful technical tool for determining if programs are meeting their stated goals. Specialists submit reports that help administrators to decide changes in curriculum content or direction.

In recent years program evaluators have taken on an expanded role because their experience can be of value in every stage of the development of the program. This Digest introduces the reader to the scope of evaluation and the changing roles evaluators are asked to play in the school district.

How Are Educational Programs Evaluated?

Every area of school curriculum is designed with certain goals in mind. A program evaluation measures the outcome of a program based on its student-attainment goals, level of implementation, and external factors such as budgetary constraints and community support.

Three categories of instructional program evaluation are described by Bruce Wayne Tuckman (1985). *Formative evaluation* is an internal function that feeds results back into the program to improve an existing educational unit; this kind of evaluation is used frequently by teachers and school administrators to compare outcomes with goals. Attainment can be measured and procedures modified over time.

Summative evaluation exists for the purpose of demonstration and documentation. Various ways of achieving similar goals can be compared. Summative evaluations help school districts analyze their unique characteristics and choose the program that will best achieve their pedagogical goals. An example is the evaluation of the adaptability and success in the work force of students who have emerged from a program.

Ex post facto evaluation is a study over time. It attempts to determine if new programs, launched without readily predictable results, are achieving the desired goals. Here the data generated by continuous analysis are compared over time and, when available, compared with data of similar pilot programs. Both longitudinal (comparison of results over time) and cross-sectional (comparison of different student groups) results give evaluators the data to recommend improvement or termination.

How Have Nontraditional Measurements Affected Program Evaluation?

The first and most important issue in evaluation— how well students achieve mastery of new facts and skills—can often be measured by standardized tests. Verifications of reliability and validity are the litmus tests of these standardized evaluation tools. Reliability is the achievement of consistency in results. Consistency is measured in several ways: by comparing test results over time (giving the same test at intervals), by grade level expectations, and by national percentile rankings. Validity is the degree to which a test actually measures what it claims to measure, that is, the successful appropriation of intended subject matter.

However, standardized testing involves a plethora of statistical uncertainties that have led some program evaluators to adopt other techniques to measure student attainment. Several alternative testing methods are being used: (1) standardized interviews allow students' responses to be compared and summarized; (2) direct tests (sometimes verbal) such as reading and math demonstrations enable teachers to gauge strengths and weaknesses and determine competency beyond mere right and wrong answers; and (3) students' notes, art work, and other material can be inspected for evidence of mastery.

Edward F. DeRoach (1988) thinks that relying on an array of achievement, literacy, and minimal competency testing overemphasizes cognitive-achievement factors while disregarding affective-aesthetic development. He suggests using a program evaluation profile that reveals less tangible values such as: (1) program description that evaluates the nature of the community and the cultural/occupational background of parents; (2) program objectives that would measure performance in American history, for example, by involvement in school political activity or community service; (3) program content that ranges from knowledge of the facts to facility with placing information in larger contexts; and (4) processes that measure listening, questioning, summarizing, solving, and creating skills, as well as social skills such as tolerance, respect, and fairness to others. It remains unclear whether such "performance-based" assessments can be usefully compared across wide-ranging student populations.

How Does Community and School Board Input Affect Program Evaluation?

The role of citizen judgments in program evaluation was the focus of four studies conducted by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in Portland, Oregon. Nick L. Smith (1983) notes the growing pressure for citizens and their representatives (school boards) to participate in school planning and review activities. Based on the American tradition of local control of education, it is thought that increased parental participation on boards developing new educational philosophies and innovative curricula would make school district programs more responsive to local ideological, economic, and cultural values.

The study concluded that citizen judgments must be used judiciously to avoid bias, but that such judgments can be predictive of community responsiveness and receptivity to future collaboration. Program evaluators have paid

By Richard Beswick

more attention to political factors in recent years as evaluation has become a stronger force in program design. Hence, attention to public sentiment needs to be a high priority.

How Do Administrators View Evaluations?

For principals and superintendents, the purpose of program evaluation is to provide information to help them make decisions regarding programs. In general, principals feel that the benefits of evaluations are minimal because of their inability to measure program components that are of real importance, or because principals' own proximity to the everyday realities of the educational process gives them what they feel is a better basis for understanding needs and implementing change. Superintendents tend to be more positive about the value of program evaluation. In particular, evaluations that reported deficiencies and discussed possible solutions were highly rated. Second in importance are personal meetings with evaluation personnel.

In small schools, the missing element in evaluations seems to be the attempt to make such studies systematic, purposive, cyclical, comprehensive, and well-communicated (James R. Sanders 1988). Sanders suggests that a Program Review Committee (PRC), composed of the superintendent, principal, grade level chairperson, and an educational specialist, be established. Each year the committee should conduct a review of one or two programs, so that each program receives careful scrutiny once every five years.

What Are the New Roles for Evaluators?

According to Jody L. Fitzpatrick (1988), the job of the evaluator is expanding from technical roles to political and advisory roles. In innovative programs, defined as those still in a research and development phase, evaluators help identify goals and develop a strategy for accomplishing these goals.

Another new role for the evaluator is translating policy questions developed by school boards and legislators into the more precise questions of program evaluation. In this role, the evaluator helps fashion new and innovative programs with features that are readily measurable. Once pilot programs are begun, the evaluator then has the opportunity to determine how fully the program was implemented before evaluating its effectiveness. According to Fitzpatrick, evaluation questions imply certain design decisions. Besides content, these questions can help determine the parameters of cost, time, and the availability of professional personnel.

The program manager can monitor the innovative program through the oral briefings and written reports of the program evaluator. To be effective, communication should be ongoing and not limited to a final report at the end of the year. This makes the reporting of evaluation findings to the state-level policy makers more sensitive and precise. Thus, the use of an evaluator as program partner is effective at every stage of program development for integrating differing levels of understanding and shifts in accountability.

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EVALUATING PRINCIPALS

Principals are often in limbo. They work in schools, but they are not teachers. They are educational managers, but they often have little contact with other managers. Given principals' ambiguous status, it is not surprising that they often receive only perfunctory evaluations. Yet effective principals are essential to effective schools. Their development—and a district's health—depends on regular and thoughtful assessment.

Why Should Principals Be Evaluated?

Principal evaluation brings many benefits. Kathy Weiss (1989) notes that it encourages communication within organizations, facilitates mutual goal setting by principals and superintendents, sensitizes evaluators to principals' needs, and motivates principals to improve. Some 97 percent of the administrators in her study agreed that the process of evaluation had encouraged communication between principals and superintendents, and 88 percent agreed that the principals had improved as a result.

In general, principal evaluation is of two broad types: formative and summative. Formative evaluation is relatively informal and is geared toward helping principals improve. Summative evaluation is more structured. Its goal is to precisely evaluate performance, and it is often used to facilitate decisions over compensation or tenure.

According to Stephen Peters and Naida Tushnet Bagenstos (1988), in the late 1980s about three-quarters of states had mandated or planned to mandate the practice. Fifteen years earlier, only a few states required a principal evaluation program.

What Are Some Common Problems of Principal Evaluation?

In spite of its growing popularity, principal evaluation often receives short shrift, due, in part, to confusion and misperception about the purpose of evaluation and the formation and application of evaluation criteria.

A survey by Daniel Duke and Richard Stiggins (1985) found that nearly three-quarters of supervisors and principals are either completely or reasonably satisfied with their principal evaluation systems. Yet the same survey showed that superintendents often perceive the evaluations as being more thorough than the principals do, and that only a handful of districts have clearly defined performance levels. Many schools also rely on standardized checklist ratings that are not tailored to a particular school's needs (McCurdy1983).

Considerable confusion often exists about the purpose of principal evaluation (Peters and Bagenstos 1988).

In addition, confusion over evaluation criteria vitiates many evaluation projects. William Harrison and Kent Peterson (1986) note that sampling of performance is often spotty and that principals frequently are unsure how assessment criteria are weighted. Only 58 percent of the principals they surveyed said that the expectations for their performance had been made clear prior to each year's evaluation. Indeed, the same survey revealed that superintendents define principals largely as instructional leaders, whereas principals tend to believe that their superintendents perceive them largely as administrators.

Such studies underscore the need for more effective principal evaluation, but assessment has its costs. Duke and Stiggins (1985) point out that superintendents often feel unable to use such evaluations, since they lack the money to reward good principals or the power to terminate poor ones. Ronald Lindahl (1986) found that principals who have enjoyed high reputations often resist a more systematic program of evaluation, apparently fearing that they have little to gain and much to lose by the process. Ambitious assessment programs can also cost time and money. Hence, Peters and Bagenstos (1988) suggest that school districts define precisely what they hope to gain by principal evaluation and that they resist the urge to overstep that definition.

What Are the First Steps in Designing a Principal Evaluation System?

Principal evaluation works best when it is not simply imposed from above. Richard Manatt (1989) suggests starting with a stakeholder's meeting of no more than twenty-five people. Jerry Valentine (1987) proposes a committee of about a dozen people, one half of them principals. That committee assesses other principal evaluation programs with the aid of a consultant, drafts a plan and submits it to the principals for amendment, and then sends the revised plan to the school board. An inservice session can familiarize principals with the evaluation process and defuse their anxiety over it.

Principal evaluation does not exist in a vacuum. It relates to the statements of purpose, long-range plans, goals, and job descriptions that districts and schools may have already formulated. The urban school district described by Lindahl (1986) created precise job descriptions that "became the format for the summative evaluation instrument." The district incorporated individualized or formative goals by requiring each school to develop annual campus improvement plans and by requiring each principal to establish annual personal growth plans. Evaluation, then, is linked to both organizational and personal goals.

Principals should be intimately involved in the goal-setting process, and they should certainly be fully informed of how the various goals will be weighted and assessed. This knowledge encourages principals to focus on the aspects of their job deemed most

By David Peterson

important. George Redfern (1986) describes a school district that bases its assessment of principals entirely on how well they attain mutually established goals.

Although it cannot substitute for on-the-job evaluation, assessment centers can offer principals intensive observation and feedback. The National Association of Secondary School Principals sponsors several such centers (Anderson 1989).

What Are the Tools Used in Principal Evaluation?

Valentine (1987) identifies a broad range of sources that can be collected to evaluate principals: attendance and test records, committee reports, newsletters, clippings, and time logs. He particularly urges supervisors to shadow principals, to take extensive notes on their actions and conversations. Data from these notes can then be transferred to the principal's evaluation form. Surveys of teachers, support staff, students, and parents can provide quantifiable evidence for key aspects of the principal's job.

BellSouth Corporation has developed a particularly thorough survey instrument that teachers and others use to assess principals' behavior in eighty-nine different areas (Anderson). The program includes an extensive followup session to facilitate interpretion of the results. Unsolicited comments from a broad range of sources can also play a large role in documenting performance.

Many people, then, can participate in principal evaluation. Those who are supervised by the principal should, of course, enjoy anonymity. The urban district Lindahl (1986) studied uses a mixture of survey questionnaires, self-evaluation, and evaluation teams. The teams consist of three people: the principal's supervisor, the director of secondary or primary education, and a peer selected by the principal. Team evaluations tend to be more balanced than solitary ones. Principals are often wary of peer evaluation (Anderson 1989, Duke and Stiggins 1985).

The evaluation material can be used in several ways. Summative assessments are concerned with pay and tenure, but they can also serve as an instrument for remedial professional development. Formative and summative evaluations alike can be part of an ongoing process, not just an annual one. Anderson (1989), for example, advocates prompt postobservation feedback conferences. Valentine (1987) points out that serious deficiencies should be identified at these conferences and growth plans constructed for remedying them. Hence a principal's year-end evaluation should contain few surprises.

What Are Some Models for Principal Evaluation?

Ideal principal evaluation systems are cooperative and flexible. Principals in the Pitt County Schools of Greenville, North Carolina, work with their evaluators to establish individualized annual performance plans and goals (Redfern 1986). Those plans are accompanied by the state's assessment instrument, a standardized list of thirty-eight items that describe the principals' major responsibilites.

In Oregon, North Clackamas School District uses two assessment systems for principals (Anderson 1989). The professional accountability program is for principals who have yet to complete three years in the district. Their evaluation instrument has eight job functions, each with several performance standards. The supervisor conducts at least three observations a year and provides narrative reports of each one. Principal-teacher conferences are also taped and reviewed. Those principals who do not meet performance standards are placed in a remedial cycle.

North Clackamas's more experienced principals are in its professional development evaluation program. They establish personal goals for two to three years, and the district provides tuition, release time, and travel allowances to assist them. Comments one participant: "It takes you off the treadmill of being evaluated every year" (Anderson 1989). One principal designed a curricular mapping system to bring the district's testing and instructional programs into alignment. These principals receive summative evaluations every four years. Cash incentives of over $1,000 are available for those who meet their professional goals.

North Clackamas School District uses formative, annual evaluations for its junior principals and employs surveys and frequent observations to measure performance in preselected areas. The formative evaluation for senior principals is less structured and encourages autonomous projects that will benefit both the principal and the district.

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FISCAL POLICY ISSUES AND SCHOOL REFORM

At the dawn of a new decade we look back on the 1980s as a period of major education reform in areas ranging from restructuring curriculum to parental choice. These ambitious initiatives advocate changes not solely for the sake of improving education but to assist the nation in recapturing its competitive edge (Bernstein 1988). Yet policymakers have rarely analyzed the fiscal dimensions of reform on schools.

This digest is intended to help school district leaders understand the most important fiscal policy issues generated by education reform and to help them respond to those issues with sound fiscal management and an emphasis on cost-effectiveness and accountability.

What Important Fiscal Policy Issues Face Schools?

Contemporary fiscal policy issues are tied to the educational policy issues that emerged over the past several years of education reform. Beginning with *A Nation at Risk* in 1983, reform initiatives spread state by state leaving few untouched. Although reform efforts varied greatly across and within states, they centered on five major areas: restructuring curriculum, the teaching profession, student outcomes, school management, and parental choice.

Many schools have returned to a traditional curriculum emphasizing core subjects, increased graduation requirements, and longer school days and years. Teacher reforms have centered on upgrading compensation through direct across-the-board increases, incentive pay plans, and career ladders. For student outcomes, reforms have placed greater emphasis on testing, from kindergarten through college.

Reform in school management has focused on school sites where principals have responsibility for planning, instruction, and budgeting often in collaboration with school councils. Choice programs allow parents to select schools either within a district or across district lines but are generally limited to public schools.

All these reforms may be synthesized into two critical fiscal policy issues: How is education reform to be financed, and do the dollars spent on education reform make a difference?

The first question speaks to the appropriate balance in the local/state/federal partnership, an unresolved policy issue. The second focuses on student outcomes, more specifically, increased student achievement. (For a sobering discussion of the results of twenty years of research on the relationship between expenditures and student performance, see Eric Hanushek's 1989 article.)

Why Should Schools Be Concerned with These Issues?

Reforms cost money; they require either an infusion of new dollars or a redistribution of current revenues. Reforms mandated at the state and federal levels, if not fully funded, increase the fiscal burden on school districts or cause a shift in funding from other programs. Locally based reforms have the same fiscal impact since they necessitate either an increase in local taxes or a reduction in spending on existing programs. Here are examples of potential costs from each of the reform areas:

Restructuring curriculum. Increasing graduation requirements starts a "domino-effect" on costs, the largest expenditure being additional staff salaries. More rigorous graduation requirements may also translate into a longer school day and increased costs for utilities and maintenance.

The teaching profession. Compensation reform to retain current teachers and attract talented newcomers, incentive pay plans, and career ladders are the costliest of education reforms, because salaries and benefits consume over half of the district operating budget (Fox 1987).

Student outcomes. Implementation of districtwide competency-based testing may appear to entail minimal cost, but small costs snowball. They include startup costs, purchase or development of tests, scoring, inservice education, and staff release time.

School management. Moving the level of decision-making to the school may appear to be cost-free, but substantial hidden costs exist. Increased clerical demands come with site-level planning, budgeting, and school councils. Inservice education for administrators, teachers, and school council members is essential to prepare them for the transition from centralization to decentralization (White 1989).

Parental choice. Choice programs vary widely in cost. Even small-scale indistrict plans involve administrative coordination costs. Also school districts generally spend resources in educating parents as to the choices available, for example, through mailings.

With regard to the second fiscal policy issue, schools need to ask whether education reform dollars are making a difference, because a watchword for the 1990s will be accountability. After a significant infusion of state funds in the 1980s, policymakers and taxpayers want results. Cost-effectiveness is also emerging as an important concept; that is, are schools making the best possible use of all resources? Schools must demonstrate in tangible terms efficient use of resources and a larger bottom line in terms of test scores.

How Can School Districts Practice Sound Fiscal Management?

Schools can successfully meet these challenges with two major strategies. First is practicing sound fiscal management, and second is an emphasis on cost-effectiveness and accountability, which are addressed in the next section.

By Faith E. Crampton

Gilbert Hentschke (1988) noted that a shift in authority must occur with site-based fiscal management. A prerequisite for assuming this new authority is mastery of these skills: budget literacy, budget construction, costing out alternatives, monitoring revenues and expenditures, and computer literacy. School-based management becomes a meaningless exercise unless all participants are fluent in fiscal management.

Budget literacy involves reading, understanding, interpreting, and analyzing a budget. Participants tie educational objectives to expenditures at the program (grade/subject), school, and district levels.

Also necessary are *budget construction* skills. The principal and school council synthesize program budgets into a school budget, and so they must be able to construct program and school budgets. Classroom teachers need skills in developing program budgets. *Costing out alternatives* means calculating the costs of different means to reach educational goals. "Packages" containing different mixes of personnel, materials, supplies, equipment, and facilities are developed for comparison and evaluation.

A budget represents a blueprint for revenues and expenditures, often requiring modifications during the school year. In a school-based management environment, the principal has responsibility for *monitoring school revenues and expenditures* regularly—monthly, quarterly, annually.

Computer literacy on an electronic spreadsheet enables all participants to easily construct a budget, cost out alternatives, and monitor revenues and expenditures.

How can school districts achieve cost-effectiveness and accountability?

Sound fiscal management provides the foundation for cost-effectiveness. In layperson's terms, it means selecting the best alternative at the least cost, not necessarily the cheapest one. For example, in purchasing student desks, durability is an important consideration. The cheapest product may cost more in the long run because it is of poor quality. Requiring those making expenditure requests to cost out alternatives is one method to ensure cost-effectiveness.

Accountability, defined as responsibility for results, builds on the base of sound fiscal management and cost-effectiveness. If a district practices sound fiscal management and consistently selects the most cost-effective options, school officials will be comfortable justifying their fiscal decisions before any audience.

Where can school districts find those with expertise to assist them in honing these skills? District personnel, such as the central office administrator in charge of budgeting, welcome the opportunity to share their knowledge. State education departments frequently offer inservice education. Also, professional organizations at the local, regional, state, and national levels provide expertise or maintain a "bank" of qualified individuals. Finally, textbooks such as Hartman's (1988) constitute a useful resource for practitioners.

What Critical Fiscal Policy Issues Lie Beyond the 1990s?

As wave after wave of reform crashes over schools, it may be difficult to find time to reflect on and plan for critical educational and fiscal policy issues only glimpsed on the horizon. If the U.S. wishes to regain its competitive edge in the world economic market, a rethinking of the federal role will be necessary particularly in the funding of student equity issues and technological innovations in learning.

Student equity issues address the health and welfare of at-risk children so that they will be successful learners and earners. In spite of valiant efforts by schools to meet the needs of at-risk students, the rates of high school dropouts and teen pregnancy remain high. Coordination of services provided by federal, state, and local agencies is essential, and the federal government is in the best position to implement and fund such a system.

While student equity issues often center on urban areas, equal access to a quality education is an issue for students in rural areas. Distance learning offers these students the possibility of a broader curriculum. This technology is in the early stages, however, and requires large investments that are beyond the capabilities of individual states. The federal government is in a strategic place to invest in development and assist states in implementation of this technology (Piele 1989).

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GANGS

Although youth gangs have existed in the cities of the United States almost as long as the nation itself, trends during the last two decades have alarmed school and com-munity officials. Gangs, now more violent than ever, are spreading to new locations. Warns Clarence Terhune, di-rector of the California Youth Authority, "the problem can erupt anywhere at almost any time" (Kay McKinney 1988).

What Is a Gang?

Gangs vary tremendously in composition and activities. Irving Spergel (1989) suggests the following working definition: "juvenile and young adults associating together for serious, especially violent, criminal behavior with special concerns for 'turf'." Turf can signify the control of a physical territory, a criminal enterprise, or both.

Defense of turf can lead to extreme violence. As Captain Raymond Gott of the Los Angeles Sheriff's Office says, simply "wearing the wrong color in a certain neighborhood can get you killed" (McKinney). Turf lines are normally drawn in the neighborhoods, but gang rivalries also have a devastating impact on schools. Often, even non-gang members begin bringing weapons to school for "protection" from robberies and gang violence (Cindy Tursman 1989).

Asian, black, Hispanic, white and interracial gangs exist, ranging in size from a few members to thousands. Ages range from preteen to adult, but the average age is dropping—from 15 in 1984, to 13 1/2 in 1987 (McKinney). The vast majority of gang members are male (Spergel).

Most gang members advertise their membership by distinctive dress and behaviors, including handkerchiefs and shoelaces of specific colors, jewelry, tattoos, jargon, and hand gestures. They mark their territory and challenge other gangs with spray-painted graffiti or gang symbols. The National School Safety Center (NSSC 1988) provides an excellent summary of the characteristics of different types of gangs.

Why Do Gangs Form?

According to Larry Rawles, deputy director of Philadelphia's Crisis Intervention Network, gang membership offers kids status, acceptance, and self-esteem they haven't found elsewhere (Del Stover 1986). In poorer communities, a breakdown of family and community structures may leave kids more receptive to gang recruitment. However, gangs can also form in affluent areas among kids who feel alienated from friends and families (Stover).

Financial gain is a powerful motive for gang involvement, especially for impoverished youths with poor education and lack of access to decent jobs (McKinney). The vast sums of money available through the drug trade have increased the size of gangs, both by recruitment and by longer retention of members. Usually only a few adult gang members make large sums of money. Aware that courts treat juveniles far more leniently than adults, they shield themselves by using juvenile gang members as everything from lookouts to gang hitmen (NSSC). Drug trafficking makes traditional turf battles bloodier by providing the money for sophisticated weaponry, and it creates new sources of conflict as rival gangs fight over lucrative drug territories (McKinney).

Where Are Gangs a Problem and How Do They Spread?

Gangs continue to be active in large cities where they have been long established, and they are spreading to suburbs and smaller cities. Pressure by police and rivals and the lure of higher drug profits push gangs to seek new territories (Dan Bryant 1989). Meanwhile, in many midsize communities factory closings and business failures create unemployment and poverty, "conditions conducive to gang activity" (Tursman).

In some cities, like Chicago and Philadelphia, gang activity is actually stabilizing or declining as their gangs move into other cities like Detroit and Milwaukee (Tursman). Gangs flourish in Los Angeles, the current "gang capital of the U.S.," in spite of increased community and police efforts, and have spread like cancer to surrounding communities (Stover). The Drug Enforcement Agency has confirmed the presence of members of Los Angeles gangs in forty-nine other cities across the nation. Chris Baca, director of Albuquerque's Youth Development, Inc., warns other midsize cities to react quickly; by the time Albuquerque acknowledged it had a problem, gangs with Los Angeles origins were firmly established (McKinney).

School officials in Eugene, Oregon, aware of the dramatic increase in gang activity in nearby Portland, recently made a unique attempt to block its spread to their own community. On October 2, 1989, eighteen-year-old Robbie Robinson, accompanied by two friends wearing gang colors, enrolled at South Eugene High School. Administrators contacted Jefferson High School in Portland, Robinson's previous high school, and learned he had an extensive record of gang activity and had been barred from finishing high school there. On Robinson's first day of attendance, a group of seven additional teens dressed in gang fashion entered and walked through the halls. One of them announced that he, too, planned to enroll.

Principal Don Jackson suspended Robinson. A week later, in the first such action in the nation, the school board sought an injunction in Lane County Circuit Court to bar the student permanently from the city's schools, not on the basis of any specific actions, but because "his mere presence at the school in clothing associated with gang

By Joan Gaustad

membership constitutes a danger to the health and safety of students" (Jeff Wright 1989). On November 8, the injunction was granted.

Some citizens expressed concern about the constitutionality of the ruling, but members of the local chapter of the NAACP and of the Community Coalition for the Prevention of Gangs applauded the action. Said Jackson, "You don't un-gang a community. We may not be able to keep it out, but at least we have to try" (personal interview, May 7, 1990).

How Can School Officials Fight Gang Activity?

Experts agree the schools must be established as neutral ground. Anything related to gang membership should be banned: weapons, violence, illegal activity, gang-identified clothing, insignia, and gestures. Staff can expect to be tested constantly by the subtle and changing forms of gang symbols.

Administrators must communicate clear, consistent standards of discipline and enforce them. In a study of Ohio gang activity, Dr. Ronald Huff found that teachers who backed down in confrontations were more likely to be assaulted than teachers who were fair but firm (Bryant). The NSSC details a number of specific conflict prevention strategies.

Graffiti should be painted over immediately. Not only does this signal that school property is not the gang's, it also discourages rival gangs from responding with more graffiti, or worse, defacing their rival's symbols, which can lead to retaliation and violence.

Anti-gang policies of the Portland school superintendent included searching students and lockers if there were indications of drugs or weapons, and expelling and referring to juvenile court any student found to possess weapons (McKinney).

Some districts split up gangs by transferring disruptive students. This may reduce friction, but Spergel warns new problems sometimes result; a gang member may be picked out if he is transferred to a school dominated by another gang (Stover). Schools may also offer alternative educational programs for gang members (Richard Arthur 1989).

Districts unused to gang activity may be reluctant to acknowledge its appearance. Roberto Rivera, director of the Chicago Intervention Network, urges school boards to encourage administrators to be alert for signs of gang activity and assure them that reporting problems won't reflect adversely on them (Stover).

Preventive efforts are also important. Chicago schools offer recreational alternatives to gang activity by staying open for evening extracurricular activities (Stover). The City of Paramount, California, has developed an anti-gang curriculum entitled "Alternatives to Gang Membership" (Tursman). Experts stress the importance of starting prevention programs in the early elementary grades in order to circumvent gang influence (Bryant). Spergel suggests specifically targeting "youth who give clear indication of gang involvement" as opposed to those identified as generally "at-risk." Some warning signs include evidence of child abuse, behavior and personality changes, gang-identified dress, sudden unexplained wealth, and increased substance abuse (NSSC).

How Can Schools and Communities Jointly Fight Gangs?

Information sharing is vital. Milwaukee School Security chief Jerry Mourning urges schools to keep abreast of gang rivalries: "You need to know what's happening in the community. What happens over the weekend, we handle on Monday mornings" (Stover). In Chicago, the school board receives monthly reports on student assaults from each school to give them an overview of citywide trends (Stover).

Police expertise can benefit schools. In Chicago, police have trained 6,000 teachers to identify gang behaviors. Milwaukee school administrators and police meet periodically to exchange information on gang activities. Police can also train school staff to handle armed or violent youths (Stover).

In many communities, schools have joined law enforcement, judicial, and civil authorities to create coordinated anti-gang programs, such as the Philadelphia Crisis Intervention Network and the Chicago Intervention Network. School boards in Pasadena and Compton, California, have invited the Los Angeles Community Youth Gang Services "to conduct weekly seminars for fourth, fifth, and sixth graders on the dangers of becoming involved with a street gang" (Stover). The NSSC lists a number of successful school and community programs, some preventive in nature.

Sometimes anti-gang efforts go beyond the community. In 1985, Illinois passed legislation increasing penalties for distribution or sale of weapons and drugs within 1,000 feet of school property. New Jersey recently established similar safe-school zones (Tursman). Even comprehensive efforts may be unable to eliminate gangs. But school officials can take steps to control gang activity within their sphere, and they can make valuable contributions to reducing the problem in their communities.

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INVOLVING AT-RISK FAMILIES IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

"I never see the parents I need to see," more than one teacher has complained. These are the parents of children at risk—at risk of failing, of dropping out, of having what in today's world accounts to no future at all.

The benefits to children whose parents are involved in the educational process are well-known: substantial research links family involvement to both academic and social success of children at school. Of all youth, at-risk children, whose numbers are increasing, have the most to gain from parent involvement. Consequently, schools need to find ways to reach at-risk families.

Who Is At Risk?

Most children are "at risk" at some time or another. James Comer states that "given increasing divorce rates, the growing numbers of single parent families and families in which both parents work, and the general complexity of modern life, even children of well-educated, middle-class parents can come to school unprepared because of the stress their families are undergoing." (quoted by Lynn Olson 1990)

Certain children, however, are in critical need of social intervention. These are generally the children who have traditionally been termed "at-risk." They are usually poor minorities often from other cultural backgrounds.

Why Is Parent Involvement Especially Important for At-Risk Children?

The main reason parental involvement with the schools is so important for at-risk children is that their home and school worlds are so different. "The predictable consequence in such situations is that children usually embrace the familiar home culture and reject the unfamiliar school culture, including its academic components and goals," says Muriel Hamilton-Lee (1988).

Suzanne Ziegler (1987) suggests it may be particularly important for teachers to develop communication with parents of at-risk children so that both understand the others' settings and expectations which may alter both settings. That is, school can become more home-like and home can have a school component. Or, as Joyce Epstein (1987) points out, family-like schools make students feel part of a "school family," where they receive individual attention which improves motivation.

Why Haven't Schools Been Reaching At-Risk Parents?

Traditional methods of parental involvement do not work with at-risk parents. In addition, the history of relationships between poor and minority parents and schools has been very different than those of the middle class. Barriers and misperceptions that exist for both parents and schools include:

Parents. At-risk parents may have feelings of inadequacy, failure, and poor self-worth, as well as negative experience with schools. Other cultures, as well as many low-income parents in general, see schools as institutionalized authority and, therefore, leave it to the teachers to educate their children. Additionally, there are economic, emotional, and time constraints (some families are struggling just to survive) and logistical problems such as lack of child care, transportation, and scheduling conflicts. In cultural minority families, involving parents can be further complicated by language barriers.

Teachers and Schools. Teacher attitudes play a large part in the academic success of at-risk children. Teachers who have low expectations for at-risk children, or who believe that at-risk parents don't care about their children and don't want to be involved in their education may contribute to childrens' failure. Teachers also may feel uncertain about how to maintain their role as experts while still involving parents.

According to Diana T. Slaughter and Valerie Shahariw Kuehne (1988), schools tend to see the parental role as traditional and perhaps passive and home-based, whereas many parents are interested in more active roles. Schools are often guilty of not taking the initiative to ask parents for help, and of not welcoming their participation. Finally, schools often organize events for their own convenience and pay little attention to the needs of at-risk parents.

What Can Be Done about These Obstacles?

Schools should consider adopting new beliefs and premises, based largely on the work of Rhoda Becher (Ziegler), Don Davies (1989), and Jean Krasnow (1990):

1. Successful at-risk programs begin with the premise that it's not any single person's or group's fault that a child or group of children is not learning; nor is it the school's fault. We are all responsible and dependent on each other.

2. All families have strengths. Successful programs emphasize them and let parents know these strengths are valued. This also means it isn't helpful to view at-risk families as deficients or as failures.

3. Most parents really care about their children. Successful programs acknowledge and express this. Studies of poor and minority parents in Maryland, New England, and the Southwest, for instance, have found that parents care deeply about their children's education but may not know how to help. (M. Sandra Reeves 1988)

4. Parents can learn new techniques. Successful programs help parents identify what they're capable of doing and how to overcome obstacles. One way to do this is by teaching them new skills and behaviors, such as helping their children through home learning.

By Lynn Balster Laontes

5. Cultural differences are both valid and valuable. Successful programs learn about other cultures and respect their beliefs. They find ways of building on the loyalty and obedience, for example, that Hispanic parents instill in their children.

6. Many family forms exist and are legitimate. Successful programs involve stepparents or even grandparents, and provide family support where resources are limited.

7. All individuals and families need to feel empowered, especially at-risk families who often feel powerless and out of control. Successful programs ask parents what they'd be interested in doing and work with *their* agendas first. Some also train at-risk parents to be part of their school's decision-making groups.

8. Partnership with at-risk families is impossible without collaboration with other community agencies. Schools cannot provide all the services that at-risk families need, such as parenting education, counseling, health care, and housing. The school staff also needs to function in a collaborative way with each other for real change to occur.

How Do I Begin a Program for Working with At-Risk Families?

The Hispanic Policy Development Project's publication (Siobhan Nicolau and Carmen Lydia Ramos 1990) offers guidelines, based on successful projects, that are useful for most at-risk groups:

- Be sure you're totally committed; half-hearted attempts do not accomplish much. There must be active support by the principal and staff. All the Hispanic projects that lacked the support of teachers and principals failed to increase parent involvement.
- Assign a project coordinator—someone who understands the culture and background of the parents and is sincerely dedicated. Give the coordinator time to do the job. Nicolau and Ramos found that leadership was the single most important element in launching a successful program with Hispanic parents.
- Be prepared to be innovative and flexible. The Hispanic projects that failed were those where new techniques were not tried, or where things were done "the way we have always done it."
- Use strong, personal outreach. "The personal approach," say Nicolau and Ramos, "which means talking face to face with the parents, in their primary language, at their homes, or at the school...was the strategy deemed most effective by 98 percent of the project coordinators." Home visits are a must.
- Make your first event fun. Start with something social as an icebreaker. Not every event can be a party, and Nicolau and Ramos offer suggestions for how to sustain involvement once you've gotten it started.
- Do not hold your first activity at school. Events may be more successful on neutral turf such as neighborhood homes or community places.
- Pay attention to environment and format. Informal settings are less intimidating to low-income parents. Make them as participatory as possible. A warm, nonjudgmental atmosphere is mandatory.
- Prepare staff with in-service workshops so that everyone understands the community being served. Include everyone; you don't want a less than welcoming secretary to spoil all the work you've done.
- Do not view child care, transportation, interpreters, and meals as frills. Providing them will make a big difference for at-risk parents.
- Choose different times to schedule events. Do it with consideration for the parents' availability.
- Do not give up if the initial response isn't overwhelming. Under the best circumstances, it takes time.

"Keep up the effort," Nicolau and Ramos conclude, "and one day you will find that you can't keep the parents away."

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Number 58, 1991

MAGNET SCHOOLS

The demands of a rapidly changing society and increasing pressure for desegregation, coupled with a rise in absenteeism, dropout rates, and academic failure in traditional schools, has led to the creation of over 1,000 magnet schools in urban school districts across the country. In order to facilitate the transition to a multiracial community and meet the prevailing desire for academic excellence, magnets have adopted innovative educational practices as an enticement for voluntary integration.

What Is Distinctive about the Policy and Objectives of Magnet Schools?

Magnets meet racial quotas through voluntary enrollment and open access beyond established attendance zones. Emphasizing a special curricula or educational structure, they attract students and parents by creating supportive, personal environments while placing high expectations on student potential and progress.

Parents, students, and community members assess the needs of their school district and design a specific magnet program to serve these issues. Set up primarily to meet federal requirements for desegregation, magnets are also proving successful in serving the specific interests and abilities of a diverse student population.

What Are Some Methods Magnet Schools Use to Meet These Objectives?

To move from desegregation to integration, magnet schools often adopt cooperative learning activities, assign multiracial seating, and encourage small group discussion. Extracurricular activities and special projects provide opportunities for students to share diverse skills, and multicultural lessons are regularly introduced into the curricula. With an emphasis on mutual respect and appreciation, and an example of positive interracial relations set by the staff, a general atmosphere of trust and goodwill is nurtured among all members of the school community.

Evaluations are given for progress and effort as well as achievement, and may be written as comments rather than grades, thus diffusing competition, lessening the tendency to stereotype or create hierarchies among students, and avoiding the sense of failure those in the "bottom half" of traditional grading systems tend to feel. Instead, students are judged by their capacity to better their last performance and fulfill their own preestablished goals.

From individually guided education to back-to-basics techniques, magnets appeal to student interest across race, age, class, and achievement levels by offering challenging courses that focus on special themes, and by using approaches that match individual cognitive skills. Teachers have the opportunity to circulate in classes and attend to the specific learning needs of each student. Generally small and flexible, magnets change curriculum to meet student needs, and depend on a resourceful, dedicated staff and supportive community.

How Are Magnet Schools Making an Impact?

Studies show that magnets improve minority achievement without hurting white achievement. Denis Doyle and Marsha Levine (1984) report that student attendance and participation are higher in magnet schools, as well as teacher satisfaction and parental control. Relations between diverse groups are generally harmonious. These results cause magnets to challenge the assumption that standardization is the most equitable system and to serve as pilots for effective educational change.

By Amy Klauke

What Are the Liabilities of Magnet Schools?

Magnets have drawn criticism for several reasons. Mary Haywood Metz (1988) observes that beneath the American concept of standardized education lies the belief that public schools prove a testing ground for talent and ability, where the best necessarily rise to the top regardless of class, race, or sex. In fact, although materials and lessons may match, subtle forces such as atmosphere, expectation, and cultural differences play a major role in the success or failure rate among schools. Thus, more privileged families can choose to live near "better" schools. Magnets, by offering attractive alternatives and extending the privilege of choice to disadvantaged populations, draw fire as elitist institutions that challenge the myth of fairness in public school standardization.

Another charge is that of tokenism. Some claim that magnets' selection processes (which vary among districts) draw only the best students and teachers. Consequently, magnets, with the veneer of accomplishing desegregation, actually leave most minority students worse off than before, offering the district an excuse not to implement more fundamental changes.

Problems arise when teachers are nonvoluntary participants who must radically alter their style to suit the program. To establish and maintain magnet objectives, principals often need to play a stronger than usual role in shaping policy, a dynamic which can lead to teacher resentment and upset the crucial positive character of these programs. Because enrollment is voluntary and selective, magnets have also been accused of paying less heed to the suggestions of parents and students.

How Can Magnets Meet Their Specific Challenges?

Magnets must appear attractive but not elitist by appealing to interest rather than ability; they must be a diverse but

not second-rate by providing sound criteria and objectives. Magnets must develop in students the abilities both to work cooperatively with persons of different backgrounds and skills and to take responsibility for their own progress in learning. Magnet schools must also respond to constituent needs—welcoming continual parent, community, teacher, and student input in design and direction—and make special efforts to encourage participation by the most marginalized and disadvantaged populations.

Their innovative style should be guided, Metz (1986) advises, by leadership that is strong without disempowering its staff. To remain viable, magnets must not be seen as temporary or experimental, but must participate in a mutually beneficial relationship with the regular schools. They must locate in neutral neighborhoods and avoid situations that indirectly discriminate (by causing, for example, black students to bus farther than whites). To avoid tokenism, George Tsapatsaris (1985) recommends that an array of magnets should be established until all children have the real option to attend schools of their choice, and consistent long-term evaluation should be implemented to provide feedback on the effectiveness and future direction of each program.

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Number 26, 1988

MEETING THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF DRUG-AFFECTED CHILDREN

The problem of drug abuse "has developed a new face—the face of a baby," note Donna R. Weston and colleagues (1989). Although drug-affected babies have been present in our society for several years, their numbers have risen dramatically since the onset of the crack cocaine epidemic in the mid 1980s. Lorraine Carli, spokeswoman for the Massachusetts Department of Social Services, states that crack, a potent smokable form of cocaine, "seems to have become the drug of choice for women" (Mitchell Landsberg 1990). And New Jersey's acting health commissioner, Dr. Leah Ziskind, attributes the rising infant mortality rate in that state to "the drug-abusing pregnant woman, and especially her preference for crack" (Landsberg).

Today, the first crack-affected children are beginning to walk through the doors of public schools across the country. Many members of this new "bio-underclass," a term coined by drug abuse expert Douglas Besharov, will require special services for developmental, behavioral, psychosocial, and learning problems caused by drug exposure. As more and more drug-affected children approach school age, school personnel must be prepared to attend to the special needs of these children and their families/caregivers.

How Serious Is the Problem?

Hospitals are witnessing a disturbing increase in the number of infants born drug-exposed. When the Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families conducted a survey of hospitals in 1989, fifteen of the eighteen hospitals surveyed reported a three- to four-fold increase in drug-exposed births since 1985 (George Miller 1989). And a recent national study of thirty-six hospitals conducted by the National Association for Perinatal Addiction Research and Education (NAPARE) indicates that approximately 11 percent of pregnant women use drugs during pregnancy. "Nationwide, an estimated 375,000 children each year are born exposed to cocaine," states Debra Viadero (1990).

Judy Howard, clinical professor of pediatrics at the University of California, Los Angeles, School of Medicine, makes the dire prediction that within a few years 40 to 60 percent of the students attending some inner-city schools will be children who were exposed to drugs while in the womb (Cathy Trost 1989).

What Kinds of Problems Are Prevalent Among Drug-Affected Children?

Researchers are beginning to identify a host of problems related to prenatal drug exposure. The characteristic behaviors of children who have been prenatally exposed to drugs are due not only to organic damage. Other risk factors—such as early insecure attachment patterns and ongoing environmental instability—also contribute to the difficulties.

Behavioral characteristics commonly seen in these children include heightened response to internal and external stimuli, irritability, agitation, tremors, hyperactivity, speech and language delays, poor task organization and processing difficulties, problems related to attachment and separation, poor social and play skills, and motor development delays (Los Angeles Unified School District 1989).

Initial findings of an ongoing study that is tracking 300 Chicago-area infants whose mothers used cocaine and possibly other drugs during pregnancy suggest that at three years of age many of the children have language problems and are easily distracted. Dan R. Griffith, a developmental psychologist participating in the study, which is funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, notes drug-exposed toddlers in the study also tend to score lower than non-exposed toddlers on tests measuring their ability to concentrate, interact with others in groups, and cope with an unstructured environment (Viadero).

Naomi Kaufman (1990) identifies other difficulties that may plague drug-affected children. "At the least," she states, "they include a much higher likelihood of lower intelligence; short attention spans; hyperactivity; inability to adjust to new surroundings and trouble following directions—all traits that can lead to failure in school."

It is important to keep in mind that not all drug-exposed children are affected similarly. Some children display relatively mild forms of impairment—perhaps displaying short attention spans and exercising poor judgment. The extent of impairment in others is severe; children with more serious problems may be unable to follow directions, engage in highly disruptive behavior, and have severe language difficulties.

Drug-affected babies and children are often described in terms of specific areas of impairment. Yet Weston and her colleagues warn that when we generalize about characteristics prevalent among drug-affected babies or the lifestyles and personal histories of drug-abusing women, we may unwittingly begin to engage in stereotyping. Every child must be seen as an individual who possesses a unique set of strengths and vulnerabilities.

How Can Schools Assist in Promoting Optimal Development?

Drug-exposed children, like children generally, progress more rapidly when they are in a predictable, secure, stable environment. School programs designed for these children, therefore, must include structure, clear expectations, and boundaries, as well as ongoing nurturing and support (Los Angeles Unified School District).

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Teachers should strive to offset prenatal risk factors and children's stressful life situations by incorporating protective factors in the classroom and helping children cope with stress in more appropriate ways. According to the Los Angeles Unified School District, which began a pilot program for drug-affected three- to six-year-olds in 1987, attention should be given to the following areas when creating a classroom environment that will promote optimal development among drug-affected children:

- Have an adult-child ratio that is high enough to promote attachment, to provide adequate nurturing, and to assist children in developing more adaptive methods of coping.
- Create a predictable environment through regular routines and rituals.
- Show respect for children's work and play space.
- Organize the classroom so that materials and equipment can be removed to reduce stimuli or added to increase stimuli.
- Give special attention to transition time. Transition time should be viewed as an activity in and of itself. These transitional periods can help children learn how to deal with change.
- Attend closely to children's language development, social and emotional development, cognitive development, and motor development. Note how skills in these areas are being applied by the child during play periods, transition times, and while involved in self-help activities. Keen observation can provide insight into how a child experiences stress, relieves tension, copes with obstacles, and reacts to change. In addition, it helps teachers become aware of the ways in which children interact with peers and adults. (Los Angeles Unified School District)

Teachers should seek to acknowledge children's feelings before dealing with their misbehavior. This conveys the message that the feelings themselves are not wrong but the way in which they are acted upon may need to be altered. This approach often results in strengthening a child's desire to function within prescribed limits. Discussion of behavior and feelings helps children to develop the ability to distinguish between wishes/fantasies and reality, integrate their experiences, and gain self-control. Allowing children to make some choices in the classroom setting encourages a sense of responsibility and builds problem-solving skills.

In addition, those working with drug-affected children should view the home as an integral part of the curriculum, since research indicates that early intervention programs result in long-term positive change only when parent/caregiver involvement is emphasized. A genuine interest in the well-being of parents/caregivers can assist in establishing a strong home-school partnership.

Should Drug-Affected Children Be Placed in Special Programs or Regular Classrooms?

The price tag of addressing the needs of drug-affected children is difficult to estimate because it is unclear what proportion will need to be placed in self-contained special education classrooms, where the cost per pupil is considerably higher than in regular classrooms. Mary Ann Stowell, assistant director of special education in the Portland (Oregon) Public Schools, admits, "If I thought all of them were eligible for special education, I would be sweating bullets" (Kaufman).

The Los Angeles and Portland school districts both believe it is preferable to try to integrate rather than segregate drug-affected children unless it is apparent that they are urgently in need of special education placement. The stigma associated with enrollment in such a special program is one reason. Another is the high cost of educating children in special programs. The Los Angeles Unified School District spends up to $18,000 a year to educate each of the three- to six-year-olds in its Pre-Natally Exposed to Drugs (PED) Program. In comparison, about $4,000 per child per year is spent to educate children in regular classes (Trost).

Some districts are currently developing plans for educating teachers about the needs and problems of drug-affected children and how best to deal with them. The hope is that if regular classroom teachers receive intensive training, they will be aware of and able to attend to the needs of drug-affected children in the regular classroom. However, others fear that the quality of education in regular classrooms will suffer from the presence of drug-affected children and the demands they will make on teachers. This, they claim, may eventually result in a two-tier educational system, in which parents who can afford to do so may elect to enroll their children in private schools (Kaufman).

When working with drug-affected babies, "the challenge," state Weston and colleagues, "becomes one of learning how better to help drug-exposed infants with compromised capacities reach out to the world, and to support their families in creating a world worth reaching for." As these infants move through toddlerhood and into childhood, schools can join in this effort.

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PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

Mothers and fathers hold bake sales, supervise field trips, and serve on boards or advisory councils for schools. They attend school concerts, plays, and sporting events. As helpful as these customary forms of parent involvement are, they are far removed from what happens in the classroom. A growing body of research suggests that parents can play a larger role in their children's education.

What Are the Benefits of Parent Involvement?

There are many advantages when parents play an active role in the educational process. Children spend much more time at home than at school. Their parents know them intimately, interact with them one-to-one, and do not expect to be paid to help their children succeed. The home environment, more familiar and less structured than the classroom, offers what Dorothy Rich (1985) calls "'teachable moments' that teachers can only dream about."

Children whose parents are involved in their formal education have many advantages. They have better grades, test scores, long-term academic achievement, attitudes, and behavior than those with disinterested mothers and fathers (Anne T. Henderson 1988).

Many studies underscore the point: parent participation in education is very closely related to student achievement. A Stanford study found that using parents as tutors brought significant and immediate changes in children's I.Q. scores. Other research projects found that community involvement correlated strongly with schoolwide achievement and that all forms of parent involvement helped student achievement. The Home and School Institute concluded that parent tutoring brought substantial improvements to a wide variety of students (Rich).

Family and school benefit when they cooperate. Children feel that these two institutions—by far the most important in their lives—overlap and are integrated. Parents who help their children succeed academically gain a sense of pride in their children and themselves. Such parents are strong advocates for the district.

What Can Parents Do to Improve Their Children's Performance?

Tutoring is probably the best way for parents to participate in public education, according to Rich. Intensive, one-to-one teaching is highly effective, and, unlike meetings, it does not take parents away from their children and their home.

Tutoring can be as simple as reading a book or discussing a television show. It may entail meeting with a teacher to determine how to help with homework. Or it can mean mastering a detailed curriculum written by specialists in home learning.

Parents' attitudes and expectations toward education can be as important as explicit teaching activities. The American Association of School Administrators (1988) suggests the following "curriculum of the home": high expectations, an emphasis on achievement, role modeling the work ethic, encouraging and providing a place for study, establishing and practicing structured routines, monitoring television, limiting afterschool jobs, and discussing school events.

What Are the Special Challenges for Involving the Parents of At-Risk Children?

Educators of at-risk children must realize that the term "at risk" is not synonymous with minority student, student in poverty, or student in single-parent or restructured household. Yet, as Carol Ascher (1987) points out, some family characteristics tend to inhibit academic achievement: households in which the parent does not or parents do not interact often with their children, ones whose composition frequently changes, non-English speaking households, and families whose cultural traditions sharply vary from the school's.

Educators must take the initiative if they wish to overcome such challenges. Briggs Middle School in Springfield, Oregon, hired a parent educator and a therapist to work directly with parents of at-risk children (Thomas E. Hart 1988). They contacted seventy-five parents, ten of whom completed the five-class program. A program developed by the Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools (1989) enables teachers to involve parents in their children's education in math, science, and social studies. The TIPS (Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork) program consists of guidelines and materials that any school or district can adapt to its own curriculum objectives and texts.

Middle College High School of New York City offers a parent support group in which parents define the topics discussed: parent-child communication, financial aid, and teenage lifestyles, for example (Douglas Berman and others 1987). Their children's attendance, grades, and behavior improved noticeably.

Ascher points out that asking parents to come to school "shuts out parents who are afraid or unable" to do so, the very parents who may well need the most help in educating their children. Home visits, telephone calls, and meetings in neutral locations may be the key to working with these parents.

How Can Schools Get Parents Involved in Their Children's Education?

Some parents are too distrustful of schools to help them educate their children. Muriel Hamilton-Lee (1988) prescribes three solutions: get parents involved in special activities like P.T.A. and school outings, enlist them in regular school affairs as assistant

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teachers or library aides, and incorporate them on planning and management teams. "Having parents interact with school professionals as colleagues and peers," she concludes, "does a great deal to reduce the barriers between them." Empathy is critical in any program for disadvantaged parents.

Yet many parents who will not volunteer in the schools or are unavailable during school hours will take time to help their children learn, particularly if they can do so at home. There are specific programs for such parents, such as Reading Is Fundamental and Family Math, which starts with parent-child workshops. Other districts devise their own home-study curricula, often consisting of one weekly activity. The TIPS program calls for parents to help their children with math and science homework and to make presentations in social studies classrooms.

Most parents require some sort of training before using such curricula. Staff can use P.T.A. meetings, open houses, or special meetings to discuss the programs and how to teach them.

Less formal programs are more easily implemented. Teacher-parent conferences are ideal opportunities for suggesting and explaining simple home study activities. Teachers can follow up such conversations by sending home notes and photocopied materials.

How Can Parent-Involvement Programs Be Implemented on a Districtwide Basis?

Innovative and energetic teachers find ways to involve parents in education. Capable administrators can do that on a larger scale.

Implementation begins by making certain that all staff members understand the subject's importance. Administrators can hire staff sympathetic to parent involvement by discussing the topic in job interviews. Inservice trainings and amended contract language can help to educate and convince tenured teachers. Simply asking or requiring teachers to schedule some of their parent conferences in the evening can make a big difference. Some districts hire a parent-school coordinator to work with faculty and parents to integrate school and home learning.

Administrators can also alert parents to home education's advantages. Newsletters and calendars offer simple and inexpensive vehicles. Some districts use more sophisticated media. Radio, television, posters, or fliers can convey short, catchy slogans on home education's importance, or they can speak to more particular topics. The Indianapolis Public Schools, for example, widely publicizes its teacher-parent conferences to encourage participation (National School Boards Association 1988).

The DeKalb County School System in Georgia uses signed contracts to underscore how important parent involvement is (Edward L. Bouie, Sr., and others, n.d.). The contract, which is also signed by the student and teacher, commits the parent to talking about school daily, attending teacher-parent conferences, monitoring television viewing, and encouraging good study habits. In turn, the teacher agrees to "provide motivating and interesting experiences in my classroom," explain the grading system, provide homework, and so forth. The district holds a signing day at the beginning of each year.

There are many ways to awaken and tap the special abilities and concerns that parents have in their children's education.

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Number 43, 1989

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

School districts are discovering that developing performance standards for administrators can be cost effective, reduce crisis management, set and maintain direction, and give the community a standard for measuring school success. In addition, "the process of developing and attending to goals and objectives can strengthen the relationship between your school board and the superintendent," Robert Heller (1984) says.

Standards Should Be Defined for Which Performance Areas?

In conjunction with each administrator's personally developed assessment plan, school boards, says John Hoben (1986), should establish and prioritize specific objectives within the following management areas: administrative, instructional, financial, operational, research and development, public and community relations, and human resources.

As Norita Aplin and John Daresh (1984) state, "the role of district administrator has been accepted by the general public, and most importantly by school boards, as primarily one of business and financial manager." It is necessary, they believe, to reinforce the concept of superintendent as an "educational leader." They report on one school district's efforts to determine "ways in which the district superintendent served as an educational leader supporting the instructional priorities of the school system."

An examination of administrative decisions to see how they reflect an emphasis on academic achievement, equity, communication, and long-range planning is crucial for district success, according to Aplin and Daresh. Evaluations should also measure the extent to which central office staff practices are consistent with district values, effectively utilize human and financial resources, and reflect commitment to the school district's stated direction.

Should Performance Standards Be Defined Before the Superintendent is Evaluated?

Not necessarily. One of the ways to decide on performance standards is to carry out an open-ended examination of the superintendent's performance. Such an approach, making use of extensive interviews and observations, can reveal the areas where the superintendent is performing effectively as well as those areas where improvement is needed. This information can then be used to define the standards against which the superintendent's performance will be judged over an agreed-upon period.

The advantage of this approach—basing the standards on what is already known about the superintendent's performance—is that it takes into account each superintendent's unique leadership style and makes sure the standards arise out of the district's real needs.

In an alternative approach, specifying the performance standards is the first step the school board takes when it designs the superintendent's evaluation process. Such an approach is especially appropriate when the board is hiring a new superintendent.

Performance standards are only one of several components of an overall assessment plan. Other sources of criteria include the district's mission statement and the superintendent's job description. Data from these and other areas, Hoben says, can be formulated into matrices showing the evaluation of key result areas, compatibility of objectives with obligations, and timelines.

What Is an Example of One District's Approach?

The Plymouth-Canton Community School District in Michigan has established an Administrative Performance Appraisal Plan whereby, according to Hoben, the board and superintendent generate yearly objectives and specify both performance standards and areas for attention. Progress on specific objectives is then reviewed in supportive sessions before a year-end evaluation. These sessions provide the board with an opportunity to discuss with the superintendent the following questions in regard to each objective:

> What is the status of the completion of this objective?
> What types of problems are hindering accomplishment?
> Is the objective realistic?
> Do we need to adjust the outcome?
> How can we help you achieve this objective?

Heller (1984) advises that specific objectives, desired results, timelines, methods of measurement, and persons responsible for the evaluation all be outlined in writing.

School boards may soon be able to use an external evaluation agent. The American Association of School Administrators, Jerry Melton and Richard Miller (1987) report, is in the process of developing assessment centers that will provide resources to identify superintendent skills. These centers will provide participants with a complete analysis of their individual strengths and weaknesses in the areas of personal, managerial, and leadership skills. The data can then form the basis of their professional development plan.

What Are Some Ideas for Follow-up Procedures?

Performance information should be filtered back into the school system in the form of a realistic, comprehensive, and individualized improvement plan for administrators. Melton and Miller suggest six followup activities:

- suggested readings and experiences in at least two development areas
- repeated listening to individualized cassettes of participants' goals and strategies
- development of a peer support network

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- followup session to check progress and provide support
- additional followup contact at specific intervals to provide reinforcement and assess performance changes
- telephone consultations to provide constructive criticism

Performance data might also be utilized to influence administrative training programs by filling in what might be revealed as perceptible gaps in superintendents' general knowledge base. David Champagne and his colleagues (1984) recommend establishing "more uniform and specific criteria for training programs which will be built around the core of learning in the school program and its reinforcement through conceptually sound supervisory systems."

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POLICY ANALYSIS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS

In the most general sense the term *policy* has been used simply as a label for a field of government activity, such as a nation's "foreign policy." At a slightly deeper level policy may be viewed as an expression of overall intentions, a formal authorization to accomplish a certain task, or even as a specific, ongoing program. From the point of view of policy analysis, the analyst is not concerned simply with the formal policy, nor even with the specific decision or decisions that created it. Rather, the analyst views policy as a process, beginning with an issue or set of issues to be resolved and culminating in the formation of, implementation, and evaluation of a policy intended to resolve the issue (Lindblom 1968).

This ERIC Digest focuses on educational policy analysis at the local school distinct level and suggests how school boards can use policy analysis as a tool for policy formation and implementation.

Which Role of the Policy Analyst Is Most Useful to Policy-Makers?

Two mutually exclusive roles have been played by the policy analyst: (1) that of the scholar, who, from the sidelines, analyzes the policy-making process (often retrospectively) with the aim of developing a greater general understanding of that process, that is, the "descriptive" policy analyst; and (2) that of the advisor, who, working with a policymaking body, helps clarify the options and advise the body on the many decisions that must be made as it implements a policy, that is, the "prescriptive" policy analyst (Hogwood and Gunn 1984). It is in this latter role that the policy analyst is of greatest use to a policy-maker, such as a local school board.

Is Policy Analysis Being Done at the Local Level?

A review of the literature on policy analysis reveals that federal and state issues receive most of the attention. Murphy and Hallinger (1984) suggest that this may be due to the fact that the issues at these larger levels (for example, school finance, discrimination, teacher salaries and benefits) are more susceptible to the collection of quantifiable data. This is not to say that policy analysis may not occur at the local school district level, but, if it does, very little of it has been reported. Because this ERIC Digest is directed primarily toward local school boards, an effort will be made to choose examples from that context.

How May Policy Analysis Help the Board Identify Issues?

In some cases the issue has already been identified, as in the case of a mandate from a higher authority (for example, legislatively imposed requirements on educating the handicapped). Often, however, the board is interested in attempting to forecast major issues facing the district in coming years. In the latter situation, the policy analyst may be called upon to carry out a needs analysis, a demand forecast, or some other formal analysis of future trends (see, for example, Mecca and Adams 1985).

An additional task of the policy analyst may involve breaking down a larger issue into subissues, which are often more amenable to resolution through the implementation of specific policies. For example, Bolland and Bolland (1980) posit a hypothetical district in which the issue of concern is the growing drug problem in the schools. The analyst would ask whether this larger issue might not be viewed in at least three different ways: (1) how to keep drugs out of schools, (2) how to alert naive and/or ignorant students of the dangers of drugs, and (3) how to make the school environment less alienating to students who seem most prone to the use of drugs as a means of escape. Each subissue may invite a radically different sort of policy for its resolution.

How Can a Policy Analyst Assist in Formulating Policies?

As an objective observer, the policy analyst may consider options not obvious to the more partisan players in the process. Again referring to the "drug problem" example (Bolland and Bolland 1980), public discussion of the issue may have become polarized to the extent that only "law and order" options have been suggested: suspension/expulsion of offending students, placement of law officers in the schools, locker searches, and so forth. The analyst might suggest a wider range of options that, in addition to the above, could include teacher inservice programs on drug abuse, an assembly series on drugs, or the development of a peer counseling program.

The school board's limited resources mean that not all options for resolving an issue can be adopted. In addition, some options may be in conflict with each other, with other school policies, or with state or federal law. (For example, locker searches have been found illegal in some states.) The role of the policy analyst is to identify all such potential conflicts and to provide a comparison of options along lines that are of particular concern to the school board: relative costs, impact on the public, acceptance by key participants, and, ultimately, the potential for resolving the issue. This stage involves the most "guesswork" for the analyst, since it entails projections into the future for each option, or set of options. Some tools that a policy analyst may rely on here include cost-benefit analysis, decision analysis, program analysis and review (PAR), and other types of futures analysis (see, for example, Pogrow 1983).

By Bruce C. Bowers

Is the Policy Analyst's Mission Complete, Once Policy Has Been Formulated?

If the analyst's role is to help develop an optimal policy response to an issue, his or her job is not complete without an examination of that policy's implementation. For example, the district may provide inservice workshops on drug abuse to health science teachers, but no subsequent curriculum on drug education is incorporated into the health science coursework. In this case the policy itself has been improperly implemented, and it may fall to the policy analyst to serve as a monitor and call attention to this shortcoming.

On the other hand, the policy may be properly implemented, and yet the outcomes do not meet expectations. Determining the effectiveness of a policy is often seen as the province of the "program evaluator," as opposed to the policy analyst. However, the distinction is a semantic one; the program evaluator is simply a policy analyst who has been introduced belatedly into the process—more as a "Monday morning quarterback." If the policy analyst, acting as evaluator, determines that the actual outcomes do not match, at least to an acceptable degree, the outcomes originally projected, then the evaluation results may be used as a basis for discontinuing the current policy and instigating a new round of policy initiatives in this issue area (Hogwood and Gunn 1984).

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Number 30, 1988

PREPARING SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

More than half of all school administrators in the United States will retire during the 1990s. The need to replace them is generating renewed interest in administrator preparation programs and affording a unique opportunity for upgrading current preparation practices. Educators are advocating racially and sexually balanced placement of new administrators, as well as promoting experiential, self-directed, broader-based training programs. Rapid social changes necessitate that administrators commit themselves to a life-long, collaborative learning process.

What Skills and Methods Should Be Emphasized in the Training of School Administrators?

The American Association of School Administrators (Hoyle and others 1985) claims that administrators need to develop skills in the following areas: designing, implementing, and evaluating school climate; building support for schools; developing school curricu'um; instructional management; staff evaluation; staff development; allocating resources; and educational research, evaluation, and planning.

In addition, AASA states that administrators must possess a thorough understanding of the learning process, as well as the ability to communicate and cooperate with people of diverse cultures, positions, and perspectives within the school and the community. School administrators should share a common vision about the role and style of twenty-first century schools and about their position within the larger society and world community.

The National Association of Elementary School Principals suggests that the role of future principals will be more that of colleague than boss, and that they will work to "facilitate, support and assist" teachers. NAESP concludes that effective leaders need "a positive, wholesome self-concept that enables them to develop the potential of others without fear and without concern for personal benefit." The report adds that knowledge of changing societal conditions and the global community and the abilities to use political and legal processes and work with parents as partners are crucial to facilitating effective school practices.

How Can Academic Programs Best Prepare Candidates for Administrative Positions?

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (1985), among others, advocates a "substantial increase in the field-based component of preparation programs." In addition, NASSP advises that internships be full-time for at least one academic year.

The National Policy Board for Educational Administration (1989) also argues for closer ties between theory and practice, and for student application of critical thinking and inquiry skills to actual school situations. "It is this end, translating sound research strategies into sound practices, that must be addressed in graduate training," providing trainees with hands-on experience and improving their abilities to "recognize, conceptualize and act on problems."

"Mutually dependent relationships between universities and school districts," according to the policy board, "can provide needed sources of free expertise, counsel, and labor for schools, as well as sources of student settings for academe." The board further recommends that preparation programs be grounded in a thorough understanding of the teaching and learning process. In addition, trainees should develop research and organizational skills as well as an understanding of the cultural, ethical, and political dimensions of schooling.

By Amy Klauke

What Are the Advantages of Internships and Mentorships?

Internships offer practical experience to candidates in administrator preparatory programs. Barbara LaCost (1987) states that adult learning is more effective when it is experiential or when it is in response to real needs and problems. LaCost proposes an andragogical or self-directed approach to learning. She outlines three stages to an internship: *Reactive*: Candidate observes a practicing administrator and responds in a seminar with questions, analysis, and reflection on potential to grow into a similar role. *Interactive*: After a candidate decides to pursue training, the trainee works in concert with administrators on specific self-selected projects designed to coordinate formal knowledge development, and to develop the areas targeted for improvement. *Active*: In this stage of internship, candidates assume almost complete responsibility for an administrative role. This phase is accompanied by one or more seminars where interns and professors continue active dialogue on the interrelationship of theory and practice.

A mentorship involves a guided, supportive working relationship between an intern and a school administrator. Jean Pence (1989) recommends that mentors have "at least four successful years as a principal," that they be "interested in participating, be good communicators, be creative and innovative, be knowledgeable about the school, and orient new principals to all aspects of the district and community." "Mentors," she says, "assist rookies with professional growth opportunities and provide support by being on call to answer questions and give suggestions." They are available to give informal, constructive feedback about specific job functions.

James W. Smith (1989) states that mentors must themselves grow during this process, encouraging and learning from interns' constructive criticism of

current school practices. He adds that mentors must allow interns to fail and learn from their mistakes.

How Can We Improve the Percentage of Women and Minorities in Administrative Positions?

According to the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration (1987), minority enrollments in education preparation programs are failing to increase and are in some instances declining. Fourteen percent of current school administrators are members of a minority population; a mere 6 percent of professors of educational administration are minorities. Although the percentage of women earning doctorates in educational administration has increased to 39 percent, the percentage of women in administrative positions is only 26 percent.

Diana Pounder (1987) says that the most difficult obstacle in placement of minority and women candidates arises from role stereotyping. Professors of educational administration could help to remedy this problem by assuring school boards that women and minorities can be effective and competent administrators and by referring particular candidates from these minority populations. She also recommends placing minority people and women on search teams and replacing nonrelevant search criteria with job-related ones associated with race, sex, or age.

The NPBEA (1989) recommends that administrator preparation programs adopt rigorous recruitment strategies to discover and encourage qualified women and minority candidates to apply for administrator training. Pounder also sees the development of leadership experiences and self-marketing skills among these populations creating equal representation in school administration.

Pence affirms the need for mentors inside and outside educational systems to provide support for minority and women candidates prior to and after their administrative training.

How Can Networking School Districts, Universities, Policymakers, and Communities Prepare School Administrators?

While universities can play an important role in the recruitment, preparation, and continuing education of school administrators, schools can serve as laboratories for university administrator programs. The National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration recommends that state and federal governments develop and supplement policies for the recruitment, training, and placement of minorities and women in administrative positions. In addition, business, industry, and public schools could exchange knowledge, specialized personnel, and resources, and could provide technical assistance to administrative trainees.

Educational administration programs must reach out to parents, retirees, school patrons, and others as instructional resources. By maintaining positive interaction with students, staff, and community members, administrators model crucial values of cooperation, communication, and respect for diversity. According to the AASA, educational administration is interactive and dynamic and its knowledge base is constantly being expanded and refined. Candidates must be given encouragement and opportunities to weave continuous, experientially based professional training into their careers in educational administration.

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PROMISING STRATEGIES FOR AT-RISK YOUTH

Early in 1990, President Bush, in concert with the nation's governors, named a 90 percent high school graduation rate by the year 2000 as one of six national education goals. When he did so, he gave official recognition to a groundswell of school/community efforts over the last decade that have sought to deter "at-risk" youth from dropping out of school.

Those at risk tend also to be among the "disadvantaged"; disproportionate numbers of them come from families at or below the poverty level and are members of minority groups. Thus a solution to the dropout problem is inseparably tied to waging a war against poverty. The stakes are clearly high and the solutions involved may stimulate far-reaching, systemic educational change.

Common Characteristics

One clear indication of the magnitude of concern over the dropout problem is the plethora of literature generated in response to it. For educators wanting a reliable guide, both the American Association of School Administrators (Brodinsky and Keough 1989) and the National School Boards Association (McCormick 1989) have published overviews of the problem. Countless other authors have scrutinized successful programs to distill the elements that might be applicable to other schools and cities. Following are some of their findings:

- Begin prevention early—in kindergarten or first grade. Dollars spent on early intervention can yield up to a six-fold savings in potential future costs of dealing with children who drop out.
- Aggressive leadership—by school boards, superintendents, principals, and teachers—is needed to make things happen.
- Parents are crucial. Incorporate them any way you can.
- Specific solutions must be school-based, rather than delivered from above, and should be woven into a comprehensive K-12 program (Hamby 1989).
- Remedial programs are out. Rather, stress high ethical and intellectual standards matched to realistic, attainable goals. Offer an "alternative strategy *for* learning, not an alternative *to* learning" (Conrath 1989).
- Teachers and principals need the training, encouragement, and "empowerment" to become active decision-makers. All participants should understand precisely how they fit within a clear, predictable structure in which strategies can be adapted to meet each student's specific needs (Levin 1987).
- Teaching should focus on continuous progress in language skills and emphasize problem-solving and teamwork. Teachers need to be tough, compassionate, and professional. They also need to possess a strong sense of how to relate to the par-ticular cultures represented in their students (McCormick 1989).
- Classes—and, when possible, schools—need be smaller to facilitate interaction and one-on-one contact with students.
- Districts and state departments of education should serve as resources and encourage decision-making to be made where it counts—at the local level. Principals should be freed from bureaucratic tasks to work more closely with teachers and students (Levin 1987).
- Students should never be allowed to disappear into anonymity. The school environment should be a place in which students are esteemed for their unique abilities and strengths (Hamby 1989).
- Educators should integrate their own services and goals with those of the basic social and health services in the community (Wehlage and others 1989).
- School leaders need to mobilize the entire community. Businesses, senior citizens, clubs, and service groups may all provide extra funding, resources, and volunteers to work with students (Slavin and others 1989).

To show how these principles have been put into practice, the following sections describe three representative successful programs.

Accelerated Schools

The Accelerated Schools Program (ASP) developed at Stanford University by Henry Levin and his associates (1991, 1990, 1987) has been replicated in more than fifty schools, most notably in a network of Illinois schools (Illinois Network of Accelerated Schools 1988). ASP accelerates learning so that students are able "to close the achievement gap and perform at grade level by the time they leave sixth grade" (Levin and Hopfenberg 1991).

Bringing children into the educational mainstream, Levin adds, means "more than bringing them up to grade level in basic skills measured by standardized tests. We are referring also to . . . capabilities in problem-solving and communication as well as their educational aspirations and self-concept as learners." A key ASP concept is the "unity of purpose" that enhances "the capacity of school staff and parents at local school sites to take responsibility for the educational outcomes of at-risk students by providing the resources, expectations, and empowerment to make educational decisions on behalf of such students" (Levin 1987).

Operational decisions rely heavily on small group task forces and a schoolwide steering committee with extensive parental training and involvement. Parents must affirm their children's educational goals; watch their health, sleep, and study patterns; talk with them regularly about their schoolwork; and be truly interested. When necessary, services for parents should include adult basic education. Instructionally, ASP is "constructed on the strengths and culture of the children with a heavy reliance on interesting applications, problem solving, active and 'hands-on' learning approaches, and an emphasis on thematic learning that

By Alan Baas

integrates a variety of subjects into a common set of themes" (Levin and Hopfenberg).

New Futures

The Annie E. Casey Foundation's New Futures Initiative addresses "the failure of community institutions to do what they can do to equip youngsters with the expectations, opportunities, supports, and incentives they need to become aspiring, responsible and successful adults" (Annie E. Casey Foundation 1989). The foundation currently provides between 1 and 2.5 million dollars annually to five cities plus smaller grants to two additional cities to fund New Futures Programs, designed to restructure community institutions so that they can better meet the needs of at-risk youth.

Each program begins by establishing a community partnership (Wehlage and others 1989) with the general goals of increased school achievement, reduced dropout and pregnancy rates, and increased young adult employment. "A social experiment in progress," New Futures requires this "community collaborative" to plan, coordinate, and implement specific youth-serving programs and "promote fundamental institutional changes." Success depends on the governing board's ability to identify the youth problems, evaluate current efforts, create legitimate plans, raise new money and reallocate existing resources within agencies, and settle "turf" issues over services delivery.

Ultimately, Wehlage explains, it is "intended to trigger and sustain a political process which is powerful enough not only to modify the services that institutions provide, but actually redefine institutional objectives as well as how those institutions are held accountable and how they interrelate." Basic characteristics include early intervention, positive incentives for both institutions and students, integrated services, increased school building autonomy, individualized instruction, teacher training and retraining, an enhanced management information system, and some form of case management to ensure that each at-risk youth receives regular, significant contact with a skilled adult.

Success For All

The Success for All (Madden and others 1989) approach at an innercity Baltimore elementary school, where 80 percent of the student population is "disadvantaged," reflects the research findings of Robert Slavin and his associates. Built on a commitment to "prevention and immediate, intensive intervention," the program strives to provide students with extra help "early, when their problems are small, to allow them to catch up with their classmates."

The program is funded in part by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education.

In the Baltimore school Madden describes, six tutors are provided for grades K-3. Each tutor works one-on-one with about eleven students per day. In addition, the school's half-day preschool and full-day kindergarten focus on developing students' language skills. Continuity between the classroom and the students' outside lives is attended to by a Family Support Team consisting of two social workers and one person in the role of parent liaison. This team handles home visits, involves parents in school activities, and makes referrals to outside agencies. A program facilitator works with the principal, district resource people, and community volunteers. Detailed teacher manuals coupled with inservice training workshops reinforce the steady, consistent "commitment to success for all."

It's a Solvable Problem

The literature is unanimous in identifying the key to dropout prevention: think positively and act accordingly—with vigor. Identify your particular population's characteristics. Look seriously at your district's management information system and utilize its resources to gather as many examples of solutions for your particular problems as you are willing to digest. Pick those solutions that you can personally commit yourself to.

Get the commitment rippling outward. Make the challenge and your goals public and never stop reminding the entire community of its stake in what you are doing. Solutions will cost more money than is typically available to public schools. Help your community to understand this and identify ways in which it can help. There are as many ways to face this challenge as there are creative, committed individuals who care about our nation's children.

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RACISM IN AMERICA'S SCHOOLS

An eight-year-old African girl in South Africa recently told Ted Koppel on *Nightline*, "White people are better than black people. Whites know more, have more, and get more. I wish I was white but I am not." American children of color do not have to contend with apartheid, but they still do not live in a prejudice-free society.

A quarter century of desegregation has not yet solved the self-deprecation, low levels of educational performance, or overall quality of life for America's people of color. Racism in any measure undermines children's self-esteem and erodes the educational process.

What role can schools play in combatting racism? As children grow up racist, the schools still have a chance to reeducate them. Some exemplary schools are training students to create a climate of antiracist peer pressure. And in a growing number of schools, new curricula promoting racial and ethnic awareness through multicultural education are turning diversity into opportunity.

What Is Racism?

Racism is a developed set of attitudes that include antagonism based on the supposed superiority of one group or on the supposed inferiority of another group, premised solely on skin color or race. Some authors suggest that racism and white racism may be synonymous. Defining bigotry as a primarily white problem does disservice in two ways. It ignores the fact that racist attitudes can breed in any ethnic group and it undermines the expressed goals of this decade's most promising solution—multicultural education. Celebration of diversity is a better foundation for racial harmony than is class guilt, says Charles Glenn (1989).

How Do Racial Attitudes Form?

Kenneth Clarke (in Mock 1988) details the developmental phases of racial attitudes in children. By age two, a child notices color differences. In the next two to four years, the child begins to identify with his or her own racial group. At that point she forms preference patterns on the basis of the prevailing attitude within the group and not by contact with a racially different group.

Parents are the earliest and most powerful source of racial attitudes (positive or negative), while peers run a close second (Savard and Aragon 1989). By the early grades every child carries at least some stereotyping.

Institutional and cultural prejudices are more subtle because they are embedded in unexamined assumptions and established procedures. The roots of these are multigenerational and can persist even after years of legislative remedies.

How Extensive Is Racism in Public Schools?

In the progressively liberal, mostly white community of Eugene, Oregon, a study (Savard and Aragon) found that racism exists and may be on the increase. The report stressed the frequency of racial jokes and slurs, derogatory racial stereotyping, and (less often) violent acts left unpunished by school authorities.

Augustine Garcia (1989) notes that our innercities and areas of high density immigration (California, Florida) are experiencing the intimidation and irrational violence of Neo-Nazi skinheads and racial gangs. Children from dysfunctional families are particularly susceptible to peer pressure to adopt a racist posture.

It is not just the condescension and violence exhibited toward minorities that must be taken into account when looking at incidents of racism. Restrictions on minorities' opportunity to succeed are often racially determined. For example, Asian-Americans incur resentment for academic excellence and "overachieving." If racism is explicit at the street level of society, it is often implicit and equally entrenched at the highest levels.

By Richard Beswick

How Is Racial Prejudice Reversed?

In addition to deeper curricular remedies, it is important to declare a public repugnance for racism. One such declaration, the Racism Free Zone, has been effective in Lane County, Oregon, schools. Developed by Clergy and Laity Concerned and modified from the Nuclear Free Zone concept, this program begins with a formal day of celebration. A plaque is prominently displayed that reads in part:

> We will not make statements or symbols indicating racial prejudice. Freedom of speech does not extend to hurting others. Racism will not be tolerated and action will be taken to ensure this.

White students acquire a feeling of ownership for this zone of protection, and minority students report a feeling of security and pride.

Far more ambitious is Project Reach, developed by the Arlington, Washington, School District (1986). This four-phased experience takes mostly white communities through human relations skills, cultural self-awareness, multicultural training, and cross-cultural encounters. Students research their own heritage to learn the fundamentals of culture; study other cultures through specially prepared booklets on African, Asian, Mexican, and native American heritages; and participate in field trips. Because Project Reach was developed for mostly white communities, it has received some national criticism for being too removed from practical racial cooperation. But given the demographic realities, communities must begin someplace.

Teachers can build tolerance in early childhood, says Barbara James Thompson (1989), by "role-playing a bus

boycott, choosing the unknown contents of a beautiful box and a dirty box, and by encountering discriminatory signs in classroom activity." Such object lessons point out the hidden values in the child's assumptions and provide role models worth emulating.

Resources for teaching about racism are listed by Samuel Totten (1989). These materials teach about the "destructive effects of stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination."

How Can Administrators Prevent Racism?

Educators can employ several strategic, motivational, and confrontational means to change racist behavior. The following list incorporates some steps that have been proved effective (Diane Pollard 1989, Lloyd Foster 1989, James VanSciver 1989, and others).

1. Articulate a clear statement of expectations regarding racism.
2. Establish and enforce a series of consequences for violations of those expectations.
3. Respond to racial incidents quickly and fairly by gathering adequate evidence. Correction should be remedial.
4. Discourage students from congregating on the school grounds according to race.
5. Design seating assignments with a priority on integration.
6. Rely on peer counseling whenever possible.
7. Seek advice and support from parent and student advisory boards.
8. Enlist the help and advice of key minority leaders in the community for teacher workshops, assemblies, and arbitration of racial incidents when appropriate.
9. Reward those who strive to reduce racism in their schools and classrooms.
10. Hire and assign an appropriate balance of minority faculty and staff to act as role models and provide an adequate base of authority for policies and discipline.

In addition, Kofi Lomotey (1989) advises school principals to communicate to teachers that *all* students can learn, focus on programs helping marginal students, broaden the base of recognized achievement by praising nontraditional work, and honor satisfactory work that represents an all-out effort by minority students.

How Can Schools Preserve Ethnic Identity in the Context of Racial Integration?

It is unnecessary to force a choice between integration of schools and the preservation of ethnic identity. In the Rafael Hernandez School in Boston, students work on shared learning tasks in the target language (English) without a double standard of performance expectations, says Charles Glenn (1989). Hispanics, African-Americans, and whites also work on Spanish and receive a positive message of its cultural value through drama and creative writing.

Of comparable importance are the programs, such as those offered by magnet schools, that encourage minorities to choose fields of math, science, and computer technology. The EQUALS program designs materials that help parents as well as teachers provide the motivation for minorities to excel in these areas (Hart and Lumsden 1989).

Glenn believes that a misunderstanding about the meaning of ethnicity and culture accounts for the reluctance of some educators to risk tampering with ethnic heritage. Ethnicity has to do with generational heritage and history. Culture, on the other hand, is the ideas, customs, and art of a people's living present. Culture is not static but rather a dynamic context for social life that all people have a right to shape. Multicultural education must distinguish between culture and ethnicity if it is to preserve minorities' ethnic identities while freeing them to participate fully in shaping the culture of society.

When these two concepts—ethnicity and culture—are made indistinct, schools can become encumbered with new stereotypes. Cultural relativity is the logical outcome. In this view, equal value is posited for all cultural and religious expressions. In contrast, good education allows students to pursue objective criteria for determining what is good or bad, valuable or useless in any particular culture. Racism may affect the way one regards another's culture or religion. But it does not follow that every articulated cultural or religious preference is racist.

Educators have gained many insights into the nature of racism. Multicultural education provides some excellent measures to root out prejudice and to foster appreciation for racial and ethnic differences.

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RECRUITING AND SELECTING PRINCIPALS

It is predicted that half of all current U.S. principals will retire within the next four or five years. Aware of the difference effective leadership can make, many school districts are reviewing unsystematic hiring practices that have emphasized image over skill, and are beginning to embrace a more comprehensive and well-thought-out principal recruitment and selection process.

What Criteria Should School Districts Consider When Selecting a Principal?

A list of competencies for principals recommended by a National Association of Secondary School Principals' task force includes problem analysis, organizational ability, decisiveness, effective communication skills, and stress tolerance.

In addition to traditional requirements such as these, personal qualities must also be given consideration to counter what Richard Ihle (1987) calls a disturbing trend "toward greater weight being given to academic credentials." The NASSP has developed a statement of ethics for principals that recognizes their important professional leadership role in the school and community.

Principals must articulate a vision and values that they can use to transform or revitalize a school's atmosphere, according to the Office of Educational Research and Improvement's *Principal Selection Guide* (1987). They should be determined, creative, and enthusiastic—willing and able to confront problems and seek out opportunities to inspire their school communities toward beneficial change. This growth needs to occur, Richard DuFour and Robert Eaker (1987) state, through empowerment rather than coercion, by "delegating, stretching the ability of others and encouraging educated risk." The principal must be the catalyst and champion of school improvement.

How Can Recruitment Practices Facilitate Identification of Promising Candidates?

Early identification and encouragement of potential candidates, especially teachers who show promise of administrative ability, Ihle (1987) says, would reduce the tendency for self-selection or the hiring of "good paper." To ensure greater consistency of recruitment goals and practices, a written policy should be developed by a trained search committee.

"Applications, transcripts, references, interviews, and assessment data," Mark Anderson (1988) claims, can help determine an applicant's level and range of competency. Broadening the search committee to include parents, teachers, students, and community members, and circulating surveys for input on desirable principal traits, would give everyone a sense of participation in the selection of a new principal.

What Innovative Steps Are School Districts Taking to Recruit Prospective Principals?

To expand their pools of qualified applicants, school districts are resorting to indistrict training programs, career ladders, and internships, as well as outside recruitment. For example, in 1987 Oregon's David Douglas School District began its STAR (Selecting and Training Administrative Recruits) program, which identifies and trains "prospective principals from within the district's teacher corps," according to Anderson. Instructional units, taught by experienced district administrators, precede a week-long practicum designed by each participant. Interested candidates then complete internships that are interspersed with workshops in educational leadership.

Another district described by Anderson provides a full-time internship as an assistant to the superintendent in order to expose prospective principals to real-life administrative situations. Extended internships (six months to one year) provide valuable experience for candidates and additional information for selectors. Long-term internships also enable both parties in the selection process to make a more informed decision.

How Can the Selection Be Fair and Comprehensive?

In the selection process, a trained, diverse team should consider information gathered from many sources, says Anderson (1988), and ask every candidate "the same, predetermined, and well-thought-out questions." Anderson adds that "effective interviews include simulations, written exercises, and situational questions."

One school district asks applicants to compose half-page essays answering challenging, pertinent questions, including "What processes will you employ in moving a school organization toward your envisioned change?" and "What are some key descriptors of leadership and management?"

At assessment centers sponsored by NASSP, participants engage in activities designed to simulate typical school situations. Exercises may include leaderless groups, fact-finding, stress tests, and personal interviews. Assessment center results not only guide potential employers, but also help prospective principals select internships and graduate courses based on a greater awareness of their personal strengths and weaknesses.

Later, followup orientation and evaluation procedures can assist new principals in becoming increasingly proficient at their jobs.

What Would Ensure Greater Representation of Women and Minorities in School Administration?

David Coursen and others (forthcoming) assert that "the extent to which

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women and minorities participate in administering the schools is one measure of education's real commitment to the ideal of equal opportunity." Children identify with role models of their same sex and race who hold leadership positions. Moreover, negative stereotypes begin to break down when a variety of persons assume influential roles. Thus it is crucial to ensure the participation of underrepresented populations in high-level positions.

A 1987-88 survey by C. Emily Feistritzer reveals that as few as 6 percent of principals are black, that 24 percent are women, and that these individuals typically lead marginal or troublesome schools. The National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration recommends identifying promising minority and women candidates; providing scholarships, fellowships, and financial aid; and monitoring affirmative action compliance more closely. Establishment of affirmative action as a high priority could lead to greater numbers of women and minorities filling the role of principal.

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REPAIRING AND RENOVATING AGING SCHOOL FACILITIES

Along with roads and highways, schools are one of the United States' largest infrastructure investments. The nation's 80,000 schools suffer under a $25 billion backlog of repair and would cost nearly $240 billion to replace. To exacerbate the situation, recent influxes of baby boomers coupled with state reforms reducing student-teacher ratios are stretching the limits on available school facilities across the country.

What Is the Current Status of Aging School Buildings?

Within the next ten years, a large number of shoddily constructed school buildings from the fifties and sixties will need immediate attention. Many of these schools, once expected to survive seventy-five years without major repairs, are in dire need of maintenance overhaul. Because "many districts have failed to maintain their buildings . . . breakdowns are occurring earlier and are more serious" (Montague 1987).

A Council of Great City Schools' report (1985) warns that "without a massive injection of capital improvements, schools in urban districts will continue to deteriorate." One-third of urban schools are more than fifty years old. Where the need increases, the resources dwindle.

What Are the Financial Implications of Restoring School Facilities?

Thomas Werner noted in 1984 that "the recent economic slump with its concomitant reduction of tax proceeds, has brought most maintenance projects to a halt. Where projects have been approved, money has not been appropriated." According to the Council of Great City Schools, school officials are only spending an average of 3.3 percent of their total budget on maintenance—one half of what they spent four years ago.

Montague refers to a 1983 study showing a 20 percent dip over ten years in the approval rate for bonds, which are the most common source of funds for school maintenance projects. To make matters worse, construction costs have risen faster than the general inflation rate, and, as Montague says, "construction needs must compete for funding with such other reforms as higher teacher salaries."

Most school districts follow a deferred maintenance schedule that often endlessly postpones restoration work. Safety items, however, remain the exception, usually cutting into the established maintenance budget. For instance, asbestos replacement and removal eats up nearly 20 percent of the repair budget in Los Angeles schools. Recent, stricter regulations from the EPA will only increase such percentages.

What Role Should States Play?

More financial support will have to come from the states, authorities say. The National Governor's Association (1988) reports that sixteen states provide no financing for school construction and many others provide only minimal support. This pattern may have to change. As the NGA report states, "the facilities issue is of such magnitude that it can not be left solely to the tradition of local control."

Another important state role, the NGA report says, "is to keep better track of school facilities needs . . . through a statewide inventory system." Each year the state could survey school buildings for maintenance and repair needs, compliance with building codes, handicapped access, asbestos removal, and energy efficiency.

What Methods Are School Districts Using to Improve the Solution?

Many school districts are trying to communicate the seriousness of the problem to their communities in an effort to build understanding and establish credibility. For example, Michigan's Whitmore Lake Public School District asked staff members to help identify problems and needed repairs, solicited recommendations and cost estimates from local trade specialists, and sought the advice of local building experts. The result was improved community relations and broader-based support.

As a method to raise funds for school construction, a 1986 California law authorizes school districts to collect revenue from developers of construction projects within the districts' boundaries. Many districts are also establishing detailed databases that list project costs and priorities. Considering restoration projects as planned maintenance and energy management, rather than deferred maintenance, has lent greater credibility and clarity to restoration programs.

Another funding solution is to lease out available space for government or private use. Ted Schwinden (1986) recommends offering space for quality child-care services, currently in high demand. "Schools used for the benefit of the community," he says, "are less prone to vandalism." Also, when people come into the schools for recreational or other activities, they better understand the need for renovation and are more likely to support school bond issues.

What Is a Capital Improvement Plan?

Kenneth Ducote (1984), in a proposal for the New Orleans public school system, suggests implementing a capital improvement plan—a practical, comprehensive, and organized approach to capital projects. Capital improvement plans include a detailed inventory of physical assets (complete with a ranking system to differentiate essential, desirable, acceptable, and deferable projects) and include current

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and projected cost estimates. The plan sets out procedures for conducting financial analysis and indicates channels for restoration requests, methods of accountability, and monitoring criteria. Effective capital improvement plans are coordinated and implemented by a trained, diverse team of specialists, school boards members, the superintendent, school staff members, and the community.

What Are Some Elements to Consider When Repairing or Renovating School Facilities?

As Tom Smith (1984) points out, "Facilities should further the academic standards of the school: if they are inadequate or inaccessible, the academic program can not be wholly successful."

Both Public Law 94-142 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 require that school facilities be made accessible for handicapped children. Renovation should also ensure that facilities are brought up to safety standards.

Energy conservation should be a major consideration in any renovation process. The Topeka School District has designed a computer program that analyzes energy consumption, helping them cut annual energy costs by 20 percent in one building. Insulation, energy-efficient windows, solar heating, and temperature control are effective energy saving measures. Ted Clark (1984) urges "that all capital improvements, from major maintenance to new construction, contain as much 'state of the art' conservation techniques as money will allow."

Contemporary school design includes features such as movable walls, builtin computer wiring, and ventilation systems that can be altered when rooms are rearranged.

Studies into theories of humanistic architecture, as well as solicitations of suggestions from school members, may offer ways to transform sterile, alienating spaces into rooms agreeable both to students and staff. (In one case, a school district invited students and community members to repaint an old gymnasium.) Broad ownership in the redesign and restoration of a school facility can encourage collective responsibility toward a building and thus prepare for its future preservation.

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RESTRUCTURING THE SCHOOLS

Having ridden the first wave of education reform measures, which stressed accountability, schools now find themselves facing another major challenge. Restructuring has become the central issue in the school reform movement.

Technological advances, increasing ethnic diversity, as well as rising rates of poverty, drug abuse, suicide, and divorce in the U.S., are a few of the demographic vicissitudes that are profoundly affecting student performance. In response, educators are taking a serious look at societal changes and trends with an eye toward restructuring schools.

What Is "Restructuring"?

"To restructure means to preserve and build upon what has been successful in educating our children and to rethink and redesign those aspects of the enterprise that have failed," Glenn Harvey and David Crandall (1988) say.

Specific areas to review, Harvey and Crandall advise, include mission and goals; organization; management; curriculum; instruction; roles, responsibilities, and regulation; external involvement; and finances.

Strategies for structural change benefit from the establishment of clearly defined goals, which may include a shift toward school-based management, decentralized decision-making, outcome-based education, more active hands-on learning, or a broadening or synthesizing of curricula.

What Characteristics of the Current Educational System Are Objects of Reform?

Before attempting to establish a direction for change, it is necessary to first analyze the existing educational structure. Kenneth A. Sirotnik (1987) points out that the educational structure is based on a factory model, with "rational, linear, machine-like top-down decisions, a production line layout, reliance on technological solutions and the use of quality control." School organization today, Lynn Olson (1988) notes, includes "the rigid grouping of students by age and ability; . . . anonymous and impersonal environments, and the dominance of passive, sedentary learning." William Spady (1988) adds that our calendar-based educational system emphasizes curriculum coverage over student mastery and has legitimized the bell-curve as a measure of student achievement. He argues that valuing outcome, rather than rate, should inform educational organization.

Barbara Benham Tye (1987) distinguishes what she labels "the deep structure" of the educational system from the unique personality of individual schools. Components of deep structure include physical uniformity, control orientation, similarity of curriculum and schedule, reliance on test scores, and tracking. The unique personality of each school, she says, reflects its own history, community characteristics, internal relationships, particular school problems, and the climate of its classrooms.

Any restructuring process needs to address whether or not institutionalized assumptions about education are being challenged and how to best solve resultant conflicts. Most educators agree that restructuring that begins at the local level is best able to send tremors of positive change throughout the deep structure.

How Can Restructuring Strategies Attend to the New Skills Students Will Need?

Social changes are challenging the fundamental structure and outcomes of our educational system, thus demanding that schools do more than provide supplementary courses or extracurricular support groups.

Considering these developments, Michael Cohen (1987) recommends that students will need to acquire "the ability to communicate complex ideas, to analyze and solve complex problems, to identify order and find direction in an ambiguous and uncertain environment and to think and reason abstractly." Small groups and student-selected activities, Cohen suggests, could "provide opportunities for all students to become meaningfully engaged in reasonably complex and demanding learning tasks . . . and gain practice working cooperatively with others." Schools that provide opportunities for frequent success and an environment in which students receive personal attention, he says, enhance students' sense of self-worth and competence and foster a positive attachment to the school. He advises treating student performance standards as fixed, but permitting the amount of time and number of opportunities students have to reach standards to vary.

Student performance standards, according to Spady, might include skills in problem-solving, decision-making, cooperation, respect for others, creativity, adaptability, and self-esteem.

How Can Individual Schools Implement a Restructuring Plan?

School reform must begin at the building level, Sirotnik argues; teachers, as repositories of first-hand experience, are the primary agents of change. "People who live and work in complex organizations like schools need to be thoroughly involved in their own improvement efforts, assuring significant and enduring organizational change." Schools, he advises, must become centers of critical and self-reflective inquiry into educational processes. They must be seen as "centers of change rather than objects to be changed." Such a shift in mentality, he feels, could heal the split between researchers and practi-tioners.

Each district will have to assess the trends in its community and establish how best to respond to the concurrent needs of its students. Harvey and

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Crandall recommend that restructuring attempts first establish a multiconstituent team that participates in the following restructuring stages:

- creating vision
- establishing goals, priorities, and strategies
- determining resources and obstacles
- anticipating policy conflicts and developing agreement procedures
- preparing for and monitoring implementation
- institutionalizing change

The first task in restructuring, according to Cohen, is "to identify key dimensions of the structure of instruction that affect pedagogical practice and student learning." The next step involves a consideration of experience and available research to serve as starting places for structural change. Finally, an understanding of the integration of forces within each school can facilitate change on various levels.

How Can District Officials Participate in the Restructuring Process?

Educators on all levels of the process must become amenable to changes originating at the building level; as Richard M. Bossone and Irwin H. Polishook (1988) advise, "A teacher's capacity and motivation to learn will be shaped by the willingness of the system to change."

Olson (1989) reports, "Increasingly, experts have come to believe that changes within schools cannot be sustained without equally fundamental reforms in district-level management." The most basic change must occur in the roles and relationships existing between educators on all levels. In San Diego Public Schools, for example, central office personnel are seeking a shift in roles—from being controllers, monitors, and protectors of the system toward becoming listeners, assisters, and supporters—from enforcers to enablers. In their new advisory role, they will need to determine and communicate which policy and budget constraints are resistant, and which resilient, to proposed restructuring plans.

District control, Cohen believes, should place emphasis on schools achieving district goals rather than following guidelines. They should create "an orientation toward performance, rather than procedures; in which the district provides the enabling tools and resources to achieve desired ends." Reviewing and approving plans, providing technical assistance and training, garnering local support, and evaluating the restructuring process, he says, will become primary district responsibilities in the restructuring process.

Because of the institutionalization of the school system, Cohen adds, state and federal policymakers must be encouraged to support local experimentation with school structures by reducing regulatory barriers, providing implementation support and technical assistance, linking rewards to performance, and researching and disseminating the results of effective new practices among the schools.

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THE ROLE OF BUSINESS IN EDUCATION

Business and education are two vital but different streams that feed American culture. Typically, business values and methods are more tangible — "product-oriented" — while education is concerned with less concrete goals such as helping our young become good citizens. Today, motivated by a need for an improved labor force, businesses are working with schools in ways that can affect every aspect of the education process. And educators, prompted by increasing conflicts between resources and goals, have been encouraging this involvement.

So far, business's participation has been relatively benign, but, judging from the wealth of literature on the topic, its role in education needs careful assessment.

What Are the Present Configurations of School-Business Cooperation?

"Partnerships" — a notion with roots in the volunteer programs of the fifties and sixties — have become the predominant type of school-business cooperation, according to the executive director of the National Association of Partners in Education (Daniel Merenda 1989). Most of these are still locally driven by volunteers who serve in classrooms under the supervision of school staff. Typically they are *not* focused on vocational education, though business support is often most effective in that area. Rather, they are aimed at "early intervention" in the educational process in an attempt to better provide "a sound general education" that will generate better educated workers.

Partnerships may be highly structured or very casual, depending on the types of intervention they are designed to achieve. Formalized partnerships occur more in urban situations. In suburban/rural areas, Dale Mann (1987) says, smaller districts simply may not have the "leadership resources" to organize formally. Often they don't want to muddy their funding strategies by drawing on resources from channels other than those already established.

How Extensive Is Business Involvement?

A U.S. Department of Education (1988) publication reports that by the end of the 1988 school year some 140,800 partnerships were involved with 24 percent of the public school population (9 million students). Small and medium-sized businesses accounted for 38 percent of the programs reported. Large businesses took care of 14 percent, and civic/service clubs took another 16 percent of the pie. The rest was divided among individuals, colleges, government agencies, organizations and foundations, and religious and special interest groups.

Many of the programs focused on math and science, with career awareness and civic education receiving the next greatest attention. Fewer concrete programs were found in reading, arts and humanities, drugs, dropout prevention, and assistance to the disadvantaged.

What Are the Advantages of Such Cooperation?

Schools are gaining much needed pragmatic support as businesses come forward to donate or loan equipment and supplies and share employees and executives to help with school management. Industries and businesses are also opening their doors to help teachers upgrade or develop new skills and learn about the labor market in their fields. The most widespread form of business help still takes place in the classroom, where volunteers released from their jobs serve as visiting tutors. On occasion, businesses invite students to come to them for learning.

Partnerships give business people the chance to work directly to improve the skills of future entry-level workers (Michael MacDowell 1989). Also, a more concrete presence in the schools helps businesses improve their public image and increase understanding of their products and services.

Less tangibly, a greater sharing of ideas can take place among all sectors of the community. Business leaders are often community leaders; an intimate acquaintance with day-to-day teaching problems can help them provide more efficient support to school funding and policy issues. Similarly, by learning more about careers and real-world applications of the skills they encounter in school, students can make more informed choices about their futures.

How Can Schools Develop Successful Relationships with Businesses?

School leaders need to be clear with themselves as to how much and what kind of involvement they want businesses to have in their schools. Once they have done that, they should stick to common sense action steps such as Charles Mykleby (1987) outlines:

Plan for long-term endeavors and identify the benefits to be gained by all participants. Set goals carefully and build task forces that represent different interest groups to help advise school boards on policy development. Refine these policies through frequent planning sessions. Be flexible and sensitive to the obligations of all participants. Be careful to provide for continuous, centralized communication and a monitoring and evaluation procedure to stabilize the process. Train both the volunteers from business and the educators who will be working with them. Explain what is expected and give teachers time to plan lessons with volunteers. Build teams and let them work out the details. Encourage site visits by teachers and students.

By Alan Bates

What About the Problem of Business Dominance?

Public schools have received many challenges in recent years concerning the quality of the students they are releasing into society. When a force as powerful as business moves into education territory, more controversy is inevitable.

Esther Schaeffer, senior vice president for policy at the National Alliance of Business (NAB), admitted recently in *Education Week* (Ann Bradley 1990) that there is "a little bit of role reversal . . . in that business is going to the schools with an agenda and wanting to figure out what needs to be done." On the same page, Amoco Corporation chair Richard Morrow is quoted as asserting that the "challenge to corporate America is to provide leadership" regarding technological illiteracy in the work force. An NAB document by Frederick Edelstein (1989) calling for "major systemic change" reinforces this feeling of business people wanting to influence education.

Top executives such as Xerox's David Kearns (1988) side with the NAB position. When businesses have to teach basic skills to their new workers, they are "doing the schools' product-recall work for them," says Kearns. He urges business to "force the agenda for school reform" or "set its own," one "driven by market forces and accountability — unfamiliar ground for politicians and educators." Yet Kearns and other leaders also assert the need for both accountability and more local control on the part of teachers.

So far, while some business leaders may indulge in perhaps excessively biting jabs at education, their intent appears to be supportive of educators retaining ultimate decision-making responsibility. More often, those jabs are directed at problems acknowledged by educators themselves — top-heavy administration, clumsy management systems, limited resources, and so forth — and seek to stimulate educational decision processes toward greater efficiency and clarity.

What Other Controversies Have Surfaced?

The possibility of business goals polluting the educational process is addressed at length and with passion by Michael Apple (1987), who warns about "the growing pressure to make the perceived needs of business and industry into the primary goals of the school." The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) also has stepped forward, arguing that any proposed involvement be consistent with defined educational values and objectives; respond to clearly understood educational needs; support rather than contradict existing educational messages; and be assessed by groups with different views as part of an ongoing review process.

"In structuring relationships with business," warns the ASCD (1989-1990), "educators should remember that the state requires students to attend school. This gives educators the responsibility of ensuring that the welfare of their students, rather than the special interest of any particular group, is promoted by school programs."

Business's interest in open enrollment offers some educators a more threatening red flag. Writing in a recent issue of *Barron's*, Michael Brody (1990) argues that "freeing parents to bail out of bad schools is the only mechanism that can compel them to change." He cites bills pending in half the nation's state legislatures concerning at least limited freedom for parents to decide which school their children will attend. A Minnesota school teacher, however, sees a different picture emerging. Judith Pearson (1989) argues that "educational benefits will be increasingly unequal under the open-enrollment plan."

What Does the Future Look Like?

Looking at 700,000-plus students dropping out each year, Mann sees little hope for "interim solutions." Nor does he see business partnerships as "levers of reform." Typically, he finds, businesses will relocate plants and purchase worker training programs more often than they will work on school reform. In the face of mounting pressures to recapture or at least train school dropouts, he, like Apple, has serious concerns about the development of an education-for-profit trend.

Ironically, while many writers worry about damage to our basic democratic principles, those same principles are often exercised vigorously as strongly motivated business leaders learn to work with similarly dedicated educators. It should be noted that business has had an unfair edge in that education has many publicly identified problems. A closer look at what business can do in its own environment is needed.

For example, giving employees flexible schedules or even allowances for time off can help parents become better involved in their children's activities. Similarly, affordable childcare at the workplace could improve children's readiness for school as well as expose them to work roles. Business leaders also need to look at the effects that lobbying to remove inventories from tax roles and sending jobs overseas have on graduates' employment hopes and motivations.

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THE ROLE OF SCHOOLS IN SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

The school is the one social institution outside the family with which nearly all children have consistent, ongoing contact. Therefore, it is particularly well-suited for identifying endangered children, including those who are being sexually maltreated. Today, many schools are striving to become more effective participants in prevention and intervention efforts designed to reduce the complex problem of child abuse.

What Factors Affect Recognition and Reporting by School Personnel?

Teachers are empathetic toward abused children, but fear and lack of knowledge may make them hesitant about reporting abuse (Thomas McIntyre 1990). Although teachers are required by law to report suspected child abuse, most colleges allow teachers to become certified without exposure to child abuse curricula. In one survey, 81 percent of teachers reported receiving no preservice information about abuse and neglect, and 66 percent said they had not been given any inservice education in this area (McIntyre 1987).

Lack of adequate training hinders teachers' ability to detect all types of abuse, but it may especially impair their ability to recognize sexual abuse, since most victims manifest no obvious external signs.

In a study that asked teachers about their knowledge of various forms of abuse, only 4 percent of the polled teachers stated that they were "very aware" of the signs of sexual abuse. Another 17 percent said they would be able to recognize signs that were "very obvious," while 75 percent reported that they would not recognize signs at any point (McIntyre).

Even when sexual abuse is suspected, however, it is not always reported to child protective services. Bonnie Trudell and Mariamne Whatley (1988) note, "The reporting philosophy of the school principal has been found to exert an important influence on teacher reporting [of sexual abuse]. Where a principal encourages it, teachers are more likely to report; where principals are reluctant to report (frequently for reasons related to maintaining good parental relations and school image), teachers report less often."

A teacher's emotional response to the issue of child sexual abuse also can affect his or her tendency to report. Because many people find it difficult to comprehend that anyone would sexually victimize children, there is a tendency to deny that the problem exists.

Some teachers also may be reluctant to report suspected abuse because they are unaware that if they make a report in "good faith," they have immunity from civil or criminal liability. Providing employees with the opportunity to discuss and ask questions about their school's policies and procedures will facilitate both understanding and compliance (Joy Rogers 1988).

What Are Some Potential Indicators of Child Sexual Abuse?

Several emotional and behavioral difficulties are commonly observed in children who are being sexually abused. Of course, just because a child exhibits some of these, educators must not automatically jump to the conclusion that the child is being sexually abused. Often signs are ambiguous; other stressors in a child's life can produce similar symptoms.

Specific signs that *may* indicate sexual abuse include regressive behaviors such as thumbsucking, enuresis (bed wetting), and nightmares; sleep disturbances; persistent, inappropriate sexual play with self, peers, or toys; knowledge of sexual behavior (often evident in drawings) that is advanced for the child's age; poor peer relationships; overly compliant behavior; acting-out behavior such as delinquency or aggression (often seen in children who attempted to get help but received none); pseudo-mature behavior; school-related difficulties including an inability to concentrate, faltering school performance, reluctance to change clothes for gym class or to participate in physical activities, and arriving at school early and staying late; running away from home; suicidal thoughts or attempts; and sexual promiscuity or avoidance of relationships (Deborah Tharinger and Ellen Vevier 1987).

Other possible indicators of sexual abuse include pain, itching, bleeding, torn or stained clothing; withdrawal (some children may retreat into a fantasy world or appear retarded); drug/alcohol abuse; and indirect allusions to problems at home (for example, a child may tell a teacher "I'm afraid to go home tonight" or "I want to come live with you") (Oregon Health Division 1987).

Abused children sometimes present information in a piecemeal fashion to test an adult's response to what they share. Therefore, it is vital for teachers and other school personnel to be provided with training not only in detecting possible abuse but in responding to intentional and accidental disclosure by children.

What Issues Relate to Allegations Involving School Employees?

Allegations of sexual misconduct involving school employees and students have been increasing (Martha McCarthy 1989). When William Bridgeland and Edward Duane (1990) interviewed principals in Canada and the U.S., they found that "it is not an accusation of physical abuse that [principals] fear, rather, it is charges of sexual abuse which are the focus of most concern."

Cases of physical or sexual abuse involving school personnel have raised the issue of whether schools are liable for employees' actions. As McEvoy

By Linda Lumsden

states, "The legal principle of 'respondent superior' suggests that, under certain circumstances, agents who hire and supervise can be liable for the actions of employees. However, it is not clear how this principle applies to situations where staff clearly violate stated policy by their abusive actions."

Rogers suggests that school administrators may be inadvertently exposing staff members to the threat of allegations by asking them to drive a single child somewhere or by allowing a teacher with an out-of-the-way office to work with children individually. Some principals in Bridgeland and Duane's study reported that their staffs are refusing to be put in what they consider "compromising positions."

A joint statement on sexual abuse of children issued by the American Association of School Administrators and the National Association of State Boards of Education (1987) emphasizes that when a school employee is convicted of sexual abuse, states should disseminate information on the conviction to all public and private schools. The statement also encourages schools to participate in the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) Clearinghouse system for reporting revocations and suspensions of teaching certificates among states.

Are Prevention Programs Effective?

Educating children about how to protect themselves from being sexually abused through school-based prevention programs is viewed by some people as another viable tool that should be used in the fight against child sexual abuse.

Although some advocate prevention programs for children, others express reservations about the conceptual assumptions underlying some programs and voice concern about the lack of attention paid to program evaluation. Those who harbor concerns believe that well-intentioned programs may have undesirable effects on the children they are aimed at helping.

"In order to protect children," state Sherryll Kraiser and others (1989), "educators and parents need to know what works. Equally important, they need to know how to accomplish this end without compromising the children's emotional well-being." Unfortunately, it is difficult to determine with certainty whether prevention programs are effective in reducing children's vulnerability to sexual abuse. Children's knowledge and performance in simulated scenarios can be measured, but improvement in these areas following exposure to a prevention program is not necessarily predictive of how children will respond when they find themselves facing a real situation.

Since a majority of abusers are members of the child's family or other trusted adults—not strangers—a myriad of powerful psychological factors have a bearing on actual situations that play no part in simulated scenarios. We must recognize that it is extremely "difficult for a child to translate knowledge into behaviors when the sexual touching is done by a powerful and important person in the child's life" (John Leventhal 1987).

How Can Schools Collaborate with Social Service Agencies?

Child abuse in general and sexual abuse in particular is such a complex problem that no one sector of society can tackle it singlehandedly. Cooperation between school personnel and child protective services workers is vital, but the roles and authority of both organizations must be clearly understood before a collaborative relationship can develop. Designating a liaison person to provide continuity between these two organizations is one way of increasing mutual understanding (Haase and Kempe). Greg McClare (1990) advocates using a consultant or resource person "to be supportive and reassuring to both principals and staff facing a child-abuse crisis."

More schools are participating in community child protection teams, which many view as a "key to effective management of child abuse" (Haase and Kempe). Teams consist of relevant specialists such as educators, social workers, doctors, lawyers, police, and mental health professionals who work together in the areas of coordination, intervention, and supervision of child abuse cases. This type of team effort serves as "a 'risk management tool,' which serves to decrease the chances of error when encountering child abuse, because decision making is shared and second opinions are built into the framework of responding," states McEvoy.

Although schools have a key role to play in the fight against abuse, we should not forget that the problem must be confronted on many levels. Ultimately, the greatest challenge may lie in attempting to alter social attitudes and conditions that foster or tolerate the sexual abuse of children.

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SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT

School-based management (SBM) is an alternative to the typical pattern of school district governance that centralizes authority in the district office. As John Lindelow and James Heynderickx (forthcoming) define it, SBM "is a system of administration in which the school is the primary unit of educational decision-making." Responsibility for certain decisions about the budget, personnel, and the curriculum is placed at the school level rather than the district level, thereby giving especially principals but also teachers, students, and parents greater control over the educational process.

What Are Some of the Advantages of School-Based Management?

A task force convened by the American Association of School Administrators, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (1988) identified nine advantages, several of which are listed below. School-based management

- formally recognizes the expertise and competence of those who work in individual schools to make decisions to improve learning
- gives teachers, other staff members, and the community increased input into decisions
- improves morale of teachers
- focuses accountability for decisions
- brings both financial and instructional resources in line with the instructional goals developed in each school
- nurtures and stimulates new leaders at all levels
- increases both the quantity and the quality of communication

Each school's flexibility to meet the needs of its students leads to greater creativity in the design of programs.

Budgeting also becomes markedly more realistic. Lindelow and Heynderickx state that schools no longer need to lobby with the central office for funds. Instead of requesting more money than is needed (with the hope of receiving a lesser amount that is sufficient to meet needs), schools receive a "lump sum," based on a formula, that they can spend as they see fit. Parents and teachers become more aware of the cost of programs, the school's financial status, and its spending limitations.

How Does SBM Affect the Roles of the School Board, Superintendent, and District Office?

The school board's role changes little in a conversion to SBM. "School-based management does not change the legal governance system of schools," says the AASA/NAESP/NASSP task force. "School boards do not give up authority by sharing authority." The board continues to set broad policies and establish a clear and unifying vision for the district and the schools.

The superintendent and district office staff serve to facilitate the actions being taken at the school level. Their role is to explain the academic and budgetary goals as well as provide technical assistance when a school has difficulty translating the district's vision into high-quality programs. The development of student and staff performance standards and evaluation of the schools (using students' test results, visits to classrooms, and random questionnaires) are also the responsibility of the district staff.

The district office also recruits potential employees, conducts the initial screening of job applicants, and maintains information on qualified applicants, from whom the schools fill their vacancies.

In the area of curriculum, the district office specifies goals, objectives, and expected outcomes and then leaves it up to the schools to determine the methods for producing the desired results. Some districts leave the choice of texts and materials to the schools, whereas others, to maintain districtwide curriculum standards, require schools to use common texts.

How Are Budget Decisions Made?

In most SBM systems, each school is given a "lump sum" that the school can spend as it sees fit. In a budgeting process outlined by JoAnn Spear (1983), the district office determines the total funds needed by the whole district, determines the districtwide costs (such as the cost of central administration and transportation), and allocates the remaining funds to the individual schools. The allocation to each school is determined by a formula that takes into account the number and type of students at that school. Often the district is responsible for purchasing and warehousing supplies and equipment specified by the schools.

Each school determines how to spend the lump sum allocated by the district. Funds can be spent on personnel, equipment, supplies, and maintenance. The school's instructional and administrative priorities are expressed through its budget priorities. Surplus funds can be carried over to the next year or be shifted to a program that needs more funds; in this way, long-range planning and efficiency are encouraged.

How Are Decisions Made at the School Level?

Most districts create school-based management councils at the school sites. Each council includes the principal, representatives of parents and teachers, and, in some cases, other citizens, support staff, and students (at the secondary level). The council conducts a needs assessment and then develops a plan of action that includes statements of goals and measurable objectives.

By Kathleen Kubick

According to Carl Marburger (1985), the council is not a little school board but helps determine how the school implements school board policies.

In some districts, the school-based management council makes most school-level decisions. In other districts, the council advises the principal, who then makes the decisions. In both cases, the principal has a large role in the decision-making process, either as part of a team or as the final decision-maker.

What Is Necessary When Implementing SBM?

From the beginning, the school board and superintendent must be supportive of school-based management. They must trust the principals and councils to determine how to implement the district's goals at the individual schools.

It is important to have a memorandum of agreement that specifies the roles and responsibilities of the school board, superintendent, principal, and SBM council. The agreement should explicitly state the standards against which each school will be held accountable. James Guthrie (1986) states that each school should produce an annual performance and planning report covering "how well the school is meeting its goals, how it deploys its resources, and what plans it has for the future."

Training in such areas as decision-making skills, problem-solving, and group dynamics is necessary for all participating staff and community members, especially in the early years of implementation. To meet the new challenges of the job, principals may need additional training in leadership skills.

What Are the Liabilities of SBM?

Participatory decision-making sometimes creates frustration and is often slower than more autocratic methods. The council members must be able to work together and concentrate on the task at hand.

Council members must spend time on planning and budget matters, leaving principals and teachers less time to devote to other aspects of their jobs. Not all teachers will be interested in the budget process or want to devote time to it. Those teachers and community members who participate in the councils may need training in budget matters.

Members of the school community must beware of expectations that are too high. According to the AASA/NAESP/NASSP task force, districts that have had the most success with SBM have focused their expectations on two benefits: increasing involvement in decision-making and making better decisions.

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SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE

School-based management is one of several reforms proposed and instituted over the past decade to improve public education. Its "ultimate goal," as White (1989) points out, "is to improve the teaching and learning environment for students." This ERIC Digest will address how school-based management has affected student performance. Since research on this topic is extremely limited, this Digest's conclusions are necessarily tentative.

What Is School-Based Management?

School-based management (SBM) programs decentralize districts' decisions by locating them in the schools. Shareholders normally include teachers and principals; some SBM programs reach out as well to parents, students, and other community members.

In some districts, principals appropriate almost all the power allocated to schools, and superintendents and school boards often retain almost all of their authority. Teacher-dominated committees may act only in consultative capacities.

Other systems give much more power to staff and community members. In Akron, Ohio, Central-Hower High School features a nine-member faculty senate in which the principal has only one vote and no veto power (Strauber and others 1990). Chicago's local school councils are dominated by parents and have particularly broad powers, including the ability to hire and fire principals and to approve school budgets and plans (Ogletree and McHenry 1990). Usually, such committees are dominated by teachers, and their powers are apt to be less sweeping. Common responsibilities include control over minor aspects of school finance and school-level planning and policy making.

How Might SBM Improve Student Performance?

Advocates of school-based management argue that student performance is likely to improve when educational management is centered in the school rather than the district. Teachers and principals, they argue, are apt to be more sensitive to the needs of particular schools and students than are central-office administrators. Furthermore, as David (1989) points out, even sound educational reforms may falter if the teachers expected to implement them have not participated in planning them.

SBM's advocates say it has many advantages over decentralized decision-making. Among the purported benefits are creating new sources of leadership, establishing accountability, and aligning budgetary and instructional priorities. White argues that shared decision-making improves staff morale and communication, certainly two critical variables in teacher performance and, indirectly, student performance. SBM may even, she asserts, "help to attract and retain quality staff."

Has SBM Succeeded in Raising Student Performance?

Establishing a relationship between school-based management and student performance is problematic. In the first place, as Malen and her colleagues (1990 a and b) point out, very little quantitative research has been done on the topic. They also argue that factors other than SBM might account for any gains in student achievement made after instituting the reform. These research problems are exacerbated by the absence of a standard definition of SBM. Studies do not always indicate to what degree schools have redistributed power.

Malen and her colleagues (1990a), after reviewing nearly 200 documents, assert that "site-based management in most instances does not achieve its stated objectives." They point out that gains in achievement scores appear "in only a small number of select pilot schools over a short period of time."

The results of SBM in city schools are mixed. A large, urban Maryland school district recorded significant and widespread improvements in test scores, particularly among African-Americans, after instituting a five-step reform plan that included SBM (Murphy 1990). But Peterson (1991) reports that test scores for Dade County, Florida's, innercity schools significantly declined after three years of school-based management.

Although improved test scores may provide direct evidence of SBM's ability to enhance student performance, considerable indirect evidence also exists. For example, Brown's (1987) case study of two Canadian school districts suggests that decentralized decision-making creates a more effective educational environment. One school's faculty decided to reduce its use of copy machines so that it could hire an additional aide. The schools' annual reviews show that junior and senior high students' satisfaction increased in most areas after the reform began. The students indicated improvements in such key areas as usefulness and effectiveness of courses and the schools' emphasis on basic skills.

Rosenholtz (1985) notes that collective decision-making has "led to increased teacher clarity about instructional purpose and method and, in the end, to increased instructional effectiveness." Indeed, research indicates that SBM improves teacher satisfaction, particularly when teachers have substantive rather than advisory roles (David). In Dade County, Florida, Peterson attributes a more collegial environment

by David Peterson

among teachers and fewer student suspensions to three years of SBM.

However, Ogletree and McHenry's Chicago survey suggests that SBM is not always popular among teachers. Three-quarters of their 100 respondents said that Chicago's decentralized school reforms had failed to bring improvements in student achievement, and an even greater proportion denied that the changes had improved teacher morale.

In sum, research as a whole does not indicate that site-based management brings consistent or stable improvements in student performance.

Why Has SBM Not Had a More Dramatic Effect on Student Performance?

Malen and her associates (1990a) indicate that many of school-based management's shortcomings are attributable to piecemeal implementation. School councils are commonly controlled by principals, with other participants assuming familiar and passive roles: "the traditional pattern wherein administrators make policy, teachers instruct, and parents provide support is maintained." These "deeply ingrained norms" are difficult to overcome. When council members are poorly trained, they are often confused and anxious about their new responsibilities. However, well-prepared participants are better able to identify duties that are time consuming and impractical.

Indeed, SBM teams often concentrate on schools' tertiary rather than instructional activities. Malen and her colleagues (1990a) note that the councils tend to center on activities such as student recognition and discipline rather than instruction and curriculum. Likewise, Brown indicates that SBM leads some principals to become increasingly interested in technical matters at the expense of curricular concerns.

Yet the neglect of classroom instruction is not inherent to SBM. SBM teams cannot be faulted for failing to increase student performance if they are not given the authority to address that task. In Chicago, for example, authority over education has been delegated largely to parents and other community members, not to school-based personnel. Additionally, it is unfair to expect any school reform to have an effect in urban areas wracked by violence, crime, and poverty.

How Might SBM Enhance Student Performance?

School-based management cannot be judged a failure until it has had a fair trial. Many programs do not concentrate on educational achievement, and many are a variation of traditional hierarchical models rather than an actual restructuring of decision-making power. David argues that districts that actually delegate substantial authority to schools tend to have leaders who support experimentation and who empower others. She and others indicate that successful reform also requires strong communication networks, a financial commitment to professional growth and training, and backing from all components of the school community (see also White; Gomez 1989).

Hill and Bonan (1991) emphasize that school-based management is a truly radical reform, one that shifts power and accountability from managers to the managed, from the central office to the school. They also argue that teachers must be prepared to assume responsibility as well as power, that they must take the initiative in school improvement under SBM, and that they must be held publicly accountable for their performance.

Peterson goes so far as to suggest that 10 percent of teacher and principal performance be based on students' academic performance. With such high stakes in SBM's success, a district that lightly or provisionally undertakes such a shift in decision-making has little chance of success.

Relatively few districts seem prepared to make such widespread changes in school operations. But more cautious attempts at SBM may not result in much power actually changing hands, and halfway measures do not seem to result in substantially improved student achievement.

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THE SCHOOL DISTRICT MANAGEMENT AUDIT

According to one estimate, only 5 to 10 percent of U.S. school districts systematically evaluate their performance (Genck 1987). Boards of education and central office officials who want to assess and improve their districts' educational effectiveness can do so by means of a management audit.

What Is a Management Audit?

A management audit is a comprehensive examination of an organization in order to assess efficient use of resources and program effectiveness. Like a financial audit, a management audit "involves a close examination of certain practices" to see how well the district is meeting its standards (Buttram, Corcoran, and Hansen 1986). Audits may address the organizational structure, curriculum, finances, or general management and may be broad or narrow in scope.

According to Tobyann Boonin and Paul Neuwirth (1983), a management audit is usually comprised of the following actions:

- identifying management objectives
- determining current facts and conditions that reflect these objectives
- defining problems and pointing out improvement opportunities
- presenting findings to the school board

"The core of the audit," say Buttram and colleagues, "is a series of interviews and the administration of a questionnaire." Once the data are gathered, a report presenting the results of the audit is prepared for the school board.

What Areas Are Covered By an Audit?

An audit typically assesses a broad range of management functions, such as the following: decision-making and evaluation processes, policymaking, resource allocation, communication procedures, and goal setting and verification. The audit can also examine the districts' work environment, improvement process, and relationship with the community.

In addition to examining performance of particular functions, William Cooley (1983) suggests studying the efficacy, quality, and equality of the overall school system. Likewise, evaluation should consider the continuity and integration of curriculum, as well as measuring individual programs and classrooms, he says. Fenwick English (1984) suggests assessing the design, delivery, and measurement of the taught curriculum and determining how these areas might be better aligned.

How Does a School District Implement a Management Audit?

After deciding to carry out an audit, a school board must then determine whether to hire an independent auditor, adopt a model that has been successfully used elsewhere, or create a task force to design and carry out their own audit. Robert Krajewski (1983) warns that hiring an independent auditor may be construed as a gesture of bad faith, breeding division between the board and superintendent. He adds that such evaluations are best done by someone with comprehensive understanding of a school district. "You can't measure the achievement of education objectives with the same precision as you can measure revenues and expenses," he observes.

A successful internally managed audit, according to Barbara Hansen and Thomas Corcoran (1986), includes the following steps:

- board orientation to the audit process
- audit team selection
- plan development
- interviews and surveys
- data analysis
- preparation of audit report
- revision and presentation to board

English (1979) adds that "the school system should be able to demonstrate how such information has been coded and examined for reliability and validity," and to show how these data have been utilized toward program improvement. Cooley, warning about possible data corruption, suggests collecting multiple indicators for particular evaluative areas and continuously refining them.

How Are Some School Districts Carrying Out Management Audits?

Illinois' Lake Forest School District, Genck reports, applied a school management model developed through the School Performance Research Project and sponsored by the Illinois Association of School Boards. The model targets three areas for management evaluation:

- Board Policy: teamwork and accountability
- Management: systems and responsibility
- Performance: measures and standards

The New Jersey School Boards Association and Research for Better Schools established a diverse, internal task force to examine research data on effective school organization and on correlations between district procedures and school effectiveness. The task force then developed a list of district practices that support student achievement. These items were then evaluated, modified, and validated (Buttram and others 1986).

Pittsburgh Public Schools collected data on the district's performance over a five-year period, permitting examination of trends. These results, Cooley says, were then organized into priority areas, the problems defined, and specific strategies implemented.

What Are the Benefits of a Management Audit?

A well-administered auditing system can provide evaluations that reflect how a school system is managing its human and financial resources. An audit that possesses valid and measurable objectives keeps a school district true to its purpose. Using data obtained from the audit to measure the district's success in

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meeting its fundamental education objectives allows the district to adjust its efforts in order to achieve its broader goals. "A well-managed school system," English (1979) claims, "is capable of changing its direction when necessary." Other benefits of management audits, Hansen and Corcoran explain, include the following:

- a clearer picture of which activities affect student achievement
- up-to-date data on which to base improvement plans
- a framework from which to conduct ongoing district evaluation
- a method of organizing and disseminating information about the district

Student learning, parent and teacher satisfaction, board confidence, accountability, and a common sense of purpose between organizational levels can be results of a well-managed district auditing procedure, Genck reports. Open communication of evaluations, improvement plans, and their results can lead to better community relations.

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SCHOOL SECURITY

A twelve-year-old repeatedly teased by other students brings a gun to school, shoots another child, and kills himself. A knife-wielding intruder mugs a teacher in the men's room. Flying bullets from a neighboring housing project force the evacuation of a high school's playing field.

Events such as these disrupt the learning environment schools try to provide, filling students and staff with fear and endangering their lives. Fortunately, a variety of preventive and coping strategies can help beleaguered teachers and administrators both to protect the school facilities and to safeguard the people who use them.

How Can a District Assess Its School Security Needs?

As Peter Blauvelt (1987) states, "A school administrator cannot control unwanted and unacceptable behavior without timely and accurate security data." He details a procedure for data recording, including a sample "Incident Profile Form" on which the exact nature, time and place of the offense, descriptions of the offender and victim, and actions taken by the school are recorded.

Robert J. Rubel, director of the National Alliance for Safe Schools (NASS), has developed a "Process Guide" that adapts crime analysis techniques to the school environment, reports Valerie Smith (1984). Disciplinary infractions and incidents of crime are documented and coded according to parameters similar to Blauvelt's. The data can then be analyzed "to identify patterns or trends and to develop intervention and prevention strategies," Smith says. Using these techniques, Duval County Public Schools in Florida identified the noon hour as the time of most thefts. Shortening the lunch period and posting off-limits areas dramatically decreased petty thefts (Smith 1984).

The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) presents examples of "Model Report Systems" developed by five school districts and gives suggestions for assessment and reporting systems (AASA 1981).

What Preventive Security Measures Are Effective?

Alarm systems can effectively reduce vandalism and burglaries. Due to the expense of installation and operation, Lanny R. Gamble and his colleagues (1987) emphasize the importance of careful planning to choose a cost-effective system appropriate to the particular school. They suggest that after surveying the equipment available, administrators should consult a qualified engineer with no vested interest before making a decision.

Metal detectors are expensive and controversial. In a 1988 New York City pilot program, security guards checked for weapons with hand-held metal detectors. No guns were confiscated in the schools, but approximately 200 weapons were found nearby, apparently dropped by students when they saw the detectors (Suzanne Harper 1989). A Detroit program using metal detectors was challenged legally and ultimately abandoned, "partly because of the difficulties in herding students through the gates in time for class" (Del Stover 1988).

Traditional methods can help protect school property and personnel without a large initial investment. The systematic use of heavy-duty locks, special key-handling procedures, fencing, identification cards, hall passes, and visitor policies is called "target hardening" (Gamble and others). Blauvelt gives a number of crime-prevention tips, ranging from inventory procedures to suggesting teachers collect money during the first period if students bring money to school for a special purpose.

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Supervision is important both in controlling student problems and in preventing intrusions. Schools may assign staff to patrol halls or cafeterias, have parents and community volunteers monitor reception areas, or hire security guards. New York City spends $43 million on a 2,050-member security staff (Stover). A police liaison program proved highly successful at Rich East High School in Park Forest, Illinois. In addition to providing security, the officers served as a source of expertise for school officials and developed friendly relations with students (Moriarty and Fitzgerald 1989).

How Can Attitudes and Behavior Be Changed to Make Schools Safer?

First of all, it is important to establish clear, consistent discipline in the school environment. Greenbaum states, "High expectations, respect, trust and positive reinforcement of good behavior are found consistently in schools demonstrating good discipline. . . . If, on the other hand, the atmosphere is one of hostility and insensitivity in which students are continually subjected to criticism and failure, serious disciplinary problems and criminal behaviors are likely to erupt." Stover describes the principal's role in setting the tone of a school, including encouraging cooperation among staff members, being personally visible, promoting student involvement, and seeing that students and staff with personal problems get help.

Raising security consciousness is also important. Blauvelt suggests discussing security with both students and staff and involving the entire school community in identifying security problems and formulating plans to cope with them. Emergency drills can prepare both students and staff to react to a crisis (Harper).

Cooperation between school and community is important. "You need a multifaceted, comprehensive approach

that involves students, teachers, administrators, parents, community leaders, and the police and courts," says Ronald Stephens of NASS (Stover).

Reaching out to students with violent tendencies and teaching them basic social skills is a promising preventive measure. A twenty-two-year research project at the University of Illinois at Chicago showed that eight-year-olds who displayed aggressive, antisocial behaviors were much more likely to commit crimes as adults, and transmitted their own aggressive tendencies to their children (Stuart Greenbaum 1989). Greenbaum cites evidence suggesting that educators can help break this vicious cycle. For example, an antibullying campaign initiated in 1983 in Norway reduced bullying and victim problems by 50 percent in two years.

Teachers may not be equipped to teach conflict resolution or to deal with violent youths. As William Wayson states, "There are tricks of the trade that teachers don't learn. They don't look into the eyes of students to see if they're on drugs or angry, so they move in too close and violate personal space" (Stover).

Special training can help give teachers the tools they need. Greenbaum recommends techniques for discouraging aggressive behavior, teaching appropriate skills instead, and coping with violence when it occurs. Walter Doyle reviews classroom management techniques, and Edmund Emmer and Amy Aussiker survey the effectiveness of four classroom discipline programs (Oliver Moles 1989).

What if Preventive Measures Fail?

Despite careful efforts, acts of violence will occur. Each school should have a written crisis plan assigning staff members specific roles in case of emergency (Harper). Most authors agree all schools should have intercom systems. School officials should have plans for communicating with "students, parents, staff, law enforcement personnel, emergency medical services, the media and hospitals" (Harper).

Clumsy handling of the aftermath of a crisis may cause additional trauma to victims. June Feder (1989) reports on assaulted New York City school staff members. While emotionally vulnerable and often injured, victims were typically shuffled from room to room, given lengthy forms to fill out, and given little emotional support. Later, fellow staff often treated victims insensitively, unconsciously denying that violence could happen to them. Administrators should educate themselves and staff about victims' emotional needs before an assault occurs.

An entire community may need therapeutic care after a crisis such as the shooting at Cleveland Elementary School in Stockton, California. School systems should determine what mental health resources are available in case of such an event. The NSSC recommends that schools be kept open for counseling and information for several days after a traumatic event, and that counseling services be made available for months, to school staff and administrators as well as to parents and children (Harper).

What Is the School District's Legal Responsibility?

Henry Lufler suggests that during the "Litigation Explosion" of the '70s, pessimistic expectations about court intervention "may have caused school personnel to become overly cautious when dealing with discipline...issues" (Moles). In reality, Lufler points out that threats outnumbered actual lawsuits, and the initial filing of unusual suits was more widely publicized than their generally unsuccessful final outcomes.

A number of court cases in the '80s produced rulings that stressed schools' responsibility for students' safety. Schools are expected to provide a physical environment that suits the purposes of an intellectual institution (Harper). Administrators who examine their security systems and take conscientious steps to safeguard students and staff may not be able to prevent all crime, but they can protect their schools from liability in court (Harper).

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SCHOOLS ATTACK THE ROOTS OF VIOLENCE

School crime and violence have been major concerns of educators and the public since the early seventies. According to Moles (1991), some types of school crime, such as theft and drug use, have remained level or diminished in recent years. However, some evidence suggests violent crime may be increasing.

In California, the first state to require school districts to keep statistics on school crime, the Department of Education (1989) reported that assaults in the schools increased by 16 percent in the four years ending with the 1988-89 school year; incidents of weapons possession rose by 28 percent. The lack of comparable data from other states makes a national trend difficult to confirm. In 1987, the National School Safety Center estimated that nationwide 135,000 boys carried guns to school daily (Gaustad 1991).

This evidence suggests that schools must work to improve discipline and physical security. These measures are not enough, however, to halt school violence; educators must go further and attack the roots of violence.

Why Is Violence Increasing?

Availability of weapons is one cause. According to the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence, for every household in the U.S., two guns are owned by private citizens (Gaustad). It's not surprising that some of these guns fall into the hands of young people. Barrett (1991) reports that in Washington, D.C., which has one of the nation's toughest antihandgun laws, juveniles can easily buy guns on the black market. Or, for short-term use, a youth can even "rent" a weapon.

Increased gang activity and drug trafficking contribute to the escalation in violence. Battles over gang "turf" and drug territories often spill over into the schools. Sophisticated weapons financed by drug profits are making these battles increasingly bloodier (McKinney 1988).

Many students in crime-ridden innercity areas carry weapons for "protection" from robberies and gang fights, even if they are not gang members themselves. "But if they're armed, as soon as they get into an argument—boom!—they're going to use it," says James Perry, a former crack dealer turned youth counselor (Barrett).

For some students, violence is a part of life. Their parents interact abusively; violent behavior is the norm in their peer groups and community. "In addition to the culture saying it's OK to be violent, they also don't have the skills *not* to be violent," says Catherine Schar, supervisor of the Portland, Oregon, Public Schools Student Discipline Programs (Gaustad).

Are Schools Reluctant to Acknowledge the Problem?

A reluctance to acknowledge violence as a problem is all too common. Greenbaum (1989), communications director for the National School Safety Center, explains that administrators may mistakenly believe that bullying, fights, and intimidation are "just something all children go through...(but) these are CRIMES. The fact that they were committed by minors on minors does not make them less than crimes."

In addition, attackers naturally prefer to act where adult witnesses can't see and hear. Kids are afraid of looking like "tattletales" if they report problems, Greenbaum points out, so administrators often remain unaware of many violent incidents.

In recent years, gangs and drug trafficking have spread from the big cities where they originated to smaller communities and suburbs. But according to police and gang experts, some educators and community leaders resist admitting these problems exist until they have become firmly established—and much harder to fight.

Some school districts *do* courageously face the reality of violence. Following a 1987 high school shooting death, Portland, Oregon, school officials acted swiftly to counter gang activity. Superintendent Matthew Prophet held a press conference in February 1988 to announce the school board's new antigang policies. The district joined other agencies in a communitywide antigang effort and was instrumental in persuading the governor to establish a gang task force at the state level (Prophet 1990). Today, though gang violence remains a citywide problem, it has been controlled in the schools.

How Can Schools Teach Kids to Be Nonviolent?

"When a child is displaying antisocial behaviors," says Schar, "you can't just say 'Stop.' You also have to teach them prosocial skills." Curricula that teach nonviolent ways of resolving conflict are a promising preventive strategy.

Portland schools use a program produced in Seattle, Washington, "Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum" (Gaustad). Lessons work to build empathy and teach impulse control and anger management. For example, in a lower grade lesson, the teacher displays a picture of a face. "How is this person feeling?" she asks. Other pictures show groups of children in social situations involving conflict. Discussion is aimed at helping children identify and describe emotions.

In grades 6 through 8, problem-solving is added; students identify the problem and think of different possible responses. When faced with conflict, many youths see "fight" or "flight" as the only alternatives. Becoming aware of other options is important.

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The "Violence Prevention Curriculum for Adolescents," developed by Massachusetts Commissioner of Public Health Deborah Prothrow-Stith, shows high school students how violent interactions begin and escalate, and teaches them anger management and nonviolent problem-solving techniques (Greenbaum). First tested in Boston area schools, the program is now used by 5,000 schools and other community agencies nationwide, according to Millie LeBlanc of the Education Development Center (telephone interview, September 26, 1991).

Peer conflict management, which evolved from successful peer tutoring programs, is used at elementary, middle, and high school levels. Volunteer "conflict managers" are given training in problem-solving and communication skills, then act as mediators for conflicts among fellow students. Mediators use a prescribed problem-solving process to help disputants find their own solutions.

A similar program, "Conflict Resolution: A Secondary School Curriculum," was developed by the Community Board Center for Policy and Training in San Francisco. The staff and students at Woodrow Wilson High School in San Francisco have noticed a difference in halls and classrooms since the program was implemented in 1987. "More tussles are being confronted with humor...a more peaceful environment is being developed."

How Can Schools Keep Kids Out of Gangs?

Experts emphasize the importance of reaching kids before gangs do. In recent years "gang prevention" curricula have been developed in cities around the nation, including Portland (Prophet), Chicago, and Los Angeles (Spergel 1989). There is some evidence that antigang curricula change attitudes toward gangs, reports Spergel; however, it has not yet been established whether gang behavior is also reduced.

Reaching kids who are already gang-involved is more difficult, but not impossible. An alternative program, implemented in Portland schools in spring 1990, yielded promising results, according to Schar. High school students suspended for fighting, assault, weapons violations, or gang violence—most of them hard-core gang members—were required to go through an antiviolence curriculum before returning to their regular schools. Small class sizes and specially trained teachers contributed to the program's effectiveness, says Schar.

Interactions with caring adults can make a difference. Some former gang members who have turned their lives around credit the influence of officers who took a personal interest in them, says Portland Public Schools Police Chief Steve Hollingsworth (Gaustad). Ronald Huff, who conducted a two-year study of Ohio gangs, heard similar stories from a number of former gang members (Bryant 1989).

According to Spergel, many gang youth would choose reputable employment if they could; unfortunately, they usually lack the skills and attitudes needed to hold good jobs. Programs that provide job training or referrals can give kids alternatives to gang crime.

Where Can Schools Turn for Help?

Schools alone can't solve problems with complex societal origins. Experts agree that comprehensive efforts involving schools, community groups, and local agencies are much more effective. And as California crime prevention specialist Dolores Farrell points out, "There's not the money to do it alone" (Lawton).

Schools can find willing allies in the community. Portland schools work with local businesses to provide job-related programs for high-risk youths. Special instruction prepares kids for job interviews and teaches them appropriate on-the-job behavior (McKinney). Lawton describes a community antigang effort in Downey, California, in which private funding supports self-esteem programs and sports programs for at-risk youth.

Police departments and other city and county agencies are logical resources for schools. In addition, districts that have developed effective programs are usually happy to share information.

State leadership can also aid schools. In California, the state education department and attorney general's office recently drew up a model plan for school safety, emphasizing prevention and interagency cooperation. The "Safe Schools" plan spares schools the effort and expense of creating their own individual plans (Lawton). The state also provides minigrants to help districts implement plans.

The preventive programs described above are too new to have yielded long-term results. But if they produce the effects they promise, schools will have played a vital part in breaking the cycle of violence.

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STATE EFFORTS TO DEREGULATE EDUCATION

"To sum it up, the governors are ready to do some old fashioned horse-trading. We'll regulate less if schools and school districts will produce better results" (National Governors' Association 1986). With these words Tennessee Governor Lamar Alexander set the tone four years ago for what now appears to be a major thrust by states to improve the quality of public education—deregulation. In so doing these states are reversing a trend that, in the words of at least one commentator, has resulted in public schools being "the most regulated enterprise in the United States" (Ohio Education 2000 Commission 1989).

What Is Meant by "Deregulation" in the Public School Context?

Public schools are governed by an intricate network of rules, regulations, and policies emanating from federal, state, and local levels. Proponents of deregulation are not advocating that this network be done away with *in toto*. Rather, they are suggesting that some regulations may be operating to the detriment of effective schooling in some situations.

For example, most schools must meet detailed state mandates regarding number of days per school year, number of hours per day, textbooks to be used, and teacher certification requirements. Such regulations have been introduced to meet perceived needs at the time, but they may also "stifle the creativity and effectiveness of the individual teacher, administrator and school" (Ohio 1989). When regulations appear to stifle, rather than promote, innovative approaches, then it is time to reevaluate their function.

While the original deregulation impetus came from the federal level under the Reagan Administration, the focus of this discussion is on the more recent efforts by states to waive regulations for the purpose of improving educational outcomes. Whereas federal regulations pertain to federally funded programs emanating primarily from the civil rights legislation of the 1960s, state regulations, which govern the day-to-day operation of the schools, go to the very heart of public education in America. When a state decides to remove, even partially, its regulatory function over education, the potential for radical change at the local level is vastly increased.

How Are States Deregulating Education?

To date more than twenty states have adopted some form of regulation-relief legislation (Olson 1990). The prevailing philosophy behind most of the legislation is that deregulation is to be offered as a reward to those districts that have proved, within the existing regulatory framework, that they can produce superior quality education.

For example, in South Carolina, under a law passed in June 1989, the top 10 percent of schools have been automatically released from a number of state regulations governing staffing, class scheduling, and class structure. Schools became eligible for automatic waivers "if, during two of the previous three years, their students' gains on two sets of standardized tests place them in approximately the top quarter of schools with similar socioeconomic characteristics; if students in their remedial programs met minimum testing requirements; if they exhibited no recurring accreditation deficiencies; and if their test scores improved annually at above average rates" (Flax 1989).

Not all states have adopted this philosophy, however. For example, North Carolina, in contrast to its southern sister state, has opted for the incentive approach to deregulation. Under its School Improvement and Accountability Act, passed in August 1989, *all* districts choosing to participate will be given lump sums of state aid rather than amounts specifically earmarked for particular programs or resources. In addition, the State Board of Education may, upon request, "waive regulations concerning class size, teacher certification, assignment of teacher assistants, and use of state adopted textbooks" (Bradley 1989).

On the other hand, North Carolina will not honor all requests for waivers. Participating districts must submit to the state for approval a local school-improvement plan that specifies three- to five-year goals for student performance, as well as annual milestones the district will use to measure progress in meeting them. Thus, while all districts have equal opportunity to participate initially in a deregulation process, each district will be evaluated annually across a number of indicators, and only those meeting criterion on 75 percent of those indicators will be permitted to continue in the program.

What Issues Confront the Deregulation Movement?

Two major issues, one practical and one philosophical, confront the movement to deregulate the public schools. The practical issue is that, for all the legislative fanfare around the offering of regulation waivers to deserving schools and school districts, there have been surprisingly few takers. The reasons for this are not entirely clear, but one observer (Olson 1990) has concluded that they fall into at least three categories.

First, many local administrators are just plain skeptical about how committed states will remain over the long haul to the deregulation movement. They are waiting to see whether this isn't just another temporary fad among academics.

Second, a state-driven deregulation movement ignores a powerful source of regulation at the local level not subject

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to state edict: the teacher bargaining agreement. A completely thorough deregulation movement must be able to persuade the local teacher union to rescind hard-won provisions in the contract if they stand in the way of improving educational outcomes.

The final, and perhaps most startling, impediment to deregulation is the sheer lack of imagination on the part of district personnel regarding potential alternatives to existing practices. For example, in San Diego, forty-eight schools are engaged in what they would like to think are qualitatively different ways of approaching public education. But, according to Hugh Boyle, president of the San Diego Teachers Association, "A lot of what is going on is not restructuring, it's modifying the way we do things" (Olson 1990). Simply increasing a district's flexibility may not be sufficient to promote innovation. States may also need to provide access to new ideas through workshops, onsite consulting, and the like.

On a philosophical level, the issue is whether, even if current deregulation efforts are successful, the end result is really the sought-after improved educational outcome. Since the majority of state deregulation programs are tying waivers to such outcome measures as student scores on standardized achievement tests, one may wonder with Susan Fuhrman (1989) whether such "narrow measures of student performance fail to capture the complexity of schooling and learning." For example, she adds, "They may direct school personnel to concentrate on factors that are not related to local learning goals and, in fact, deflect attention from such goals." While this issue is more thoroughly addressed in an earlier Digest (Bowers 1989), it deserves mention here as an example of the difficulties facing any educational improvement effort that ties incentives or rewards to the results of standardized testing.

What Is the Prognosis for the Continued Expansion of State-Level Deregulation ?

It appears that a major stumbling block to the practical implementation of state-level deregulation legislation is the dearth of suggested alternatives to the existing educational system. As Fuhrman points out, this "lack of vision" problem, while critical, may only be temporary. After all, deregulation is only one facet of a much larger, more all-encompassing school restructuring movement. Should this movement continue to build momentum, it ought to yield more concrete alternatives to the status quo. Thus, the cur-rent vacuum of ideas that may be behind the underwhelming response of districts to voluntary deregulation may soon reverse itself, as innovations become more widely available and establish credibility.

Certainly not all regulations are barriers to innovation. Indeed, many are in place to protect the basic health, safety, and human rights of students, as well as to ensure the smooth daily functioning of the educational enterprise. At the same time, if our nation's schools are to retain the flexibility necessary to respond to the rapidly changing world of knowledge, then they must be given a certain degree of freedom *from* regulation. Finding the appropriate balance between autonomy and regulation is a challenge that may never be fully met, but it is one that continually must be raised.

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STATE-ENFORCED ACCOUNTABILITY OF LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Over the past thirty years the tradition of "local control" in American public education has been buffeted by increasing pressure from state and federal authorities in such areas as school desegregation, school finance, and education for the handicapped. The major trend has been to hold school districts accountable for overcoming the local forces that impede equal educational opportunity for all school-aged children. More recently, state authorities have also begun to focus on the overall quality of education being provided by local districts. A perusal of developments taking place in several states suggests that a state-imposed "accountability system" is gradually taking shape.

What Form Does This Accountability System Take?

State authorities are wielding both the carrot and the stick in their efforts to make local districts more responsive to the educational needs of students. That is, they have established both an incentive system to reward high-performing districts and a system of sanctions to be applied to districts with a record of repeated low performance. To accomplish this, a majority of states are now collecting from local districts a formidable array of statistics on student performance, including, at the very least, student achievement test scores, minimum competency scores, or both.

What Incentives Are Being Awarded to Districts with High Performance Levels?

Incentives are generally of two types: financial and "deregulatory." For example, in fall 1988, Texas Lieutenant Governor Bill Hobby unveiled a plan to provide state financial incentives to districts that improve student performance on test scores (Mathis 1988). On a larger scale, Michigan Governor James Blanchard has proposed to provide $500 million in incentive funds to districts that raise their students' scores on the state's assessment test (Mirga 1988).

On the other hand, incentives of a "deregulatory" nature have been proposed by South Carolina's Governor Caroll Campbell, Jr., who recently announced a proposal to exempt nearly one-fourth of the state's 1,100 districts from virtually all state regulations, based on those districts' student test scores (Flax 1988).

What Problems Are Associated with Rewards for District Performance?

As Chris Pipho (1987), director of the Education Commission of the States Clearinghouse, states, "turning the media spotlight on a host of outcome variables without alerting everyone concerned to the differences at the starting gate will undoubtedly cause some problems at the local level." If performance indicators are used indiscriminately, without taking into account, for example, the socioeconomic differences among the districts, then the lower performing districts will also, for the most part, be the poorer districts. Such eventualities could give rise to an entire new round of equity/finance-related court challenges.

A harbinger of this possible direction was seen in New York City school officials' reaction to New York State's release, in 1985, of its first school-by-school indicators. They claimed the assessment was unfair because, of the 600 schools identified as "most in need of improvement," 417 were in New York City's poorest sections (Hooper 1985). South Carolina has taken this potential problem into account in its proposed "deregulation" legislation by establishing comparable socioeconomic groupings before isolating the high performing schools.

What Sanctions Are Being Proposed for Districts with Low Performance Levels?

Traditionally the major "weapon" used by states to "punish" a school district that fails to meet state standards has been to decertify the district until it complies was established standards. This has historically been an issue primarily with small, rural districts, and the solution has often been to merge the noncomplying district with a neighboring district.

Recently, however, a much more radical approach is being implemented in states where grave concerns about some of its larger districts have been raised. In these states, sanctions include a close monitoring of the low-performing district and, if performance does not improve, an eventual placement of that district into "receivership" by the state on a charge of "academic bankruptcy."

Which States Are Currently Implementing "Academic Bankruptcy" Legislation?

To date six states (Kentucky, New Jersey, New Mexico, South Carolina, Texas, and West Virginia) have passed legislation that includes, as a last resort, the possibility of a state takeover of "academically bankrupt" districts. Of these, only New Jersey and Kentucky have attempted an actual takeover.

In May 1988, New Jersey Education Commissioner Saul Cooperman began proceedings to take control of the Jersey City public schools, "describing the district as 'bleak' and rife with patronage, cronyism and fiscal misdealings" (Jennings 1988). The Jersey City Board of Education responded by spending over $1.4 million in a court battle to overturn the decision. On July 26, 1989, Administrative Law Judge Ken Springer recommended that the takeover be allowed to proceed. If this recommendation is upheld by the State Board of Education (seen as a formality by

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most observers), Jersey City could become the first major urban school system in the nation to come under full state control. According to Melodye Bush of the Education Commission of the States, "the New Jersey effort is being watched as a test by educators across the country" (Brinckman 1989).

The only other state takeover effort to date was launched in January 1989 by the Kentucky State Board for Elementary and Secondary Education against the Floyd and Whitley County school districts. Both districts suffered from major deficiencies in student attendance, test scores, and financial stability, according to state officials (Cropper 1989).

What Are the Consequences of a State Takeover of a District?

New Jersey and Kentucky have adopted very similar approaches to assuming state control of a district. A complete takeover is implemented only after the district has been monitored for at least a year and, in addition, given technical assistance if deficiencies remain after the monitoring phase. In New Jersey, for example, the plan includes the removal of the current superintendent, the board of education, and other key administrators and the appointing of a state district superintendent who will have authority over the district for at least five years (New Jersey State Department of Education 1986).

Such legislation, if fully implemented, as is the case in the Jersey City district, clearly eradicates all vestiges of local control. Proponents of "state takeover" legislation suggest, however, that the fundamental issue is not that of local control but of quality education. Cooperman (1988) summarized it this way: "Takeover does not threaten *responsible* local control of schools. It is reserved for *extreme* cases in which a district has reached a state of decay that is analogous to the failure of a bankrupt business....We must assure that the 'thorough and efficient' schools provision of our state constitution is met. And the best way to achieve *lasting* improvement in a deficient school district is to establish *responsible local* control."

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STATE VS. LOCAL CONTROL OF SCHOOLS

During the past thirty years, local school districts have gradually yielded policy-making discretion to state legislatures and bureaucracies. States' efforts to achieve equity and improve student and teacher performance have considerably diminished local controls over funding, standards, and curricular content.

The new state primacy is a drastic reversal of American political ideology, which has traditionally spurned distant government in favor of decision-making power closer to home. To restore balance, states can avoid prescribing the details of school practice, and school boards can assert their leadership role.

What Are the Reasons for Growing State Control Over Education?

Michael Kirst (1988) attributes growing state involvement to the public's loss of confidence in local schools' ability to provide high-quality education. In addition, in the mid-1960s new interest groups drew the nation's attention to such issues as civil rights, women's roles, student rights, and bilingual education—issues that had been overlooked by local politics. As federal and state categorical aid programs were established to serve these needs, local entities such as the PTA gradually lost their influence. Local initiative was further eroded in the 1970s by declining student enrollments, resistance to property taxes, and court decisions concerning student rights and due process.

As states assumed a stronger role in school finance, their policy-making strength also increased. Until 1979, the local contribution to public education still exceeded the state share. By 1983, "the local portion had dwindled to about 42 percent while the state share had risen to 50 percent," with federal monies making up the difference (Doyle and Finn 1984).

By this time, accountability and minimum competency testing had failed to counter the growing discontent with academic standards, teacher competence, and curriculum quality. National commission reports such as *A Nation at Risk* led to intrusive state reforms aimed at the heart of the educational process.

What Are the Advantages of State Control?

Specially targeted groups such as the handicapped, gifted, non-English-speaking, and disadvantaged certainly benefited from increased state (and federal) involvement with education. States also tried to achieve greater social equity through school finance reform. This movement was based on "the proposition that the amount of money spent on a child's education should not depend on accidents of geography" (Doyle and Finn 1984).

In California, disparities of property wealth and tax capacity led to the "Serrano" decision declaring the state's system of educational finance unconstitutional. "Serrano," in conjunction with property tax limitations, created (somewhat unintentionally) a uniform statewide public school financing system that helped equalize children's access to education regardless of resident district.

Although the loss of local autonomy rankles many educators, some welcome more centralized control and direction from the state capitol. Before the Texas legislature mandated sweeping reforms, this state's 1,100 fiercely independent school districts displayed "glaring differences in both quantity and quality of" educational programs and considerable financial inequities (Killian 1984). Thanks to very strict, detailed directives, every Texan child has a better chance for a sound education.

What Are the Disadvantages of Tighter State Controls?

Although some observers believe that centralized and standardized policies can increase school effectiveness, much evidence suggests that the most significant improvements occur when individual schools are given more responsibility, not less (Kirst 1988). In their arguments for a statewide voucher system as an alternative to the traditional state or local controls, Doyle and Finn assert the importance of a school-level "shared moral order" developed over the years by teams of educators, parents, and students.

According to Shannon (1985), state mandates that lack funding or tamper with everyday governance and administration are likely to "fall of their own weight." State functionaries would be hard-pressed to assume the multiple judicial, legislative, public relations, and tax-raising responsibilities of local school boards.

State education departments tend to be sluggish bureaucracies with contradictory goals and regulations not readily adaptable to diverse local contexts. For example, state policies designed to ensure curricular alignment with statewide tests can conflict with policies designed to attract and retain outstanding teachers, who need opportunities to exercise their independence and creativity. Also, states' emphasis on standardized testing tends to narrow the curriculum.

Can States Allow Greater Local Flexibility?

Ideally, there should be a balance of state and local controls, a way to foster higher standards without discouraging local initiative or squelching teacher creativity. One way is "for the state or district to emphasize desired outcomes in broad terms and not prescribe content

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or procedures in detail" (Kirst 1988). Bound only to a common core of knowledge and skills, individual schools should be encouraged to develop their own "distinctive characters" and "pursue shared educational goals."

For example, California's School Improvement Program (SIP) is a comprehensive effort to encourage local flexibility and responsibility through self-assessment and goal-setting processes. New York State's Action Plan recognizes that "effective reform requires action throughout the educational system" (Ambach 1984). The plan provides for local implementation flexibility and easy access to state advisors for help in meeting standards.

Given the Present Situation, What Can Local Policy-Makers Do?

Even though they are confronted with increasing administrative complexities and burdensome state mandates, local school boards are far from helpless. While limited in their freedom to structure agendas or decision-making outcomes, school boards still enjoy strong public support as an "institutional buffer" protecting local schools from domination by both state and local bureaucrats.

Instead of focusing their energies narrowly on business affairs, local boards must become assertive policy-makers who direct administrators' supervisory and management functions, assume responsibility for implementing state and federal mandates, and set standards for academic excellence (Bell 1988). Boards can strengthen their roles by reviewing their own policies, clarifying their goals and practices, ensuring effective policy-making and implementation procedures, undertaking more systematic training for individual board members, and reaffirming separate areas of administrative and policy-making responsibilities. Above all, local boards need to work closely with teacher organizations and other groups to help initiate state education policies, rather than reacting to state-generated proposals.

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STOPPING DRUG ABUSE

As surveys show drug abuse to be a national priority concern and Congress initiates strong antidrug legislation, schools are seeking the most effective ways to stem the tide of alcohol and drug use among their students.

Why Should Educators Be Concerned About Drug Abuse by Students?

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, one in twenty high school seniors drinks alcohol daily, and 61 percent have tried illegal drugs (Bachman and others 1986). Even more alarming, one in ten high school seniors admits to having tried the addictive and toxic drug cocaine (Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan 1987). As Susan Hooper (1988) points out, the United States ranks "first among all industrialized nations in the number of young people using illicit drugs."

Use of alcohol and drugs by students poses a serious threat to society, to the students themselves, and to the educational process. The relationship between drug use and crime is evident in a Bureau of Justice Statistics report (Beck and others 1987) stating that nearly half of juveniles in correctional facilities committed their offenses while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Drug and alcohol abuse is also linked with dropping out of school, depression, suicide, and violence.

Also of direct concern to educators is the effect of drugs on student learning. According to Hooper, "scientific research has shown that many drugs, even when taken in small doses, can cause permanent damage to the learning centers of the brain—damage which increases with increased drug use."

Responding to the drug crisis, more than half of the states require local school districts to implement comprehensive substance abuse programs (Cashman 1986). Many states have established councils to coordinate community and school prevention and educational efforts. In some states, preservice training in drug and alcohol abuse prevention is a prerequisite for teacher certification.

What Are School Districts Doing to Stop Drug Abuse?

As each district assesses its own particular substance abuse problem, responses range from strict punitive measures to strengthening personal coping skills and careful reworking of structures that may be leading students to drug dependency.

Oregon's Newberg School District bases its Drug and Alcohol Student Assistance Program on the premise that "addiction is a disease that follows a predictable pattern and is treatable" (Leatt 1987). Along with a comprehensive drug education program, Newberg trains an Impact Team composed of school and community members versed in causes, symptoms, and intervention techniques of substance abuse. Teachers who observe behaviors symptomatic of drug use in a student fill out a referral form that can lead to further monitoring of the student's behavior by other faculty members and to an interview arranged with the family. With parental agreement, the student then begins an appropriate rehabilitation program.

Deane Flood and Ellen Morehouse (1986) warn that, "in their quest to help, educators often prevent students from suffering the negative consequences of their substance abuse. As a result, the students have no reason or motivation to change." Westchester County's Student Assistance Program, these authors say, works to diffuse such enabling responses by, for instance, sponsoring chaperoned social events and establishing a firm, publicized policy regarding possession of drugs or alcohol.

Ohio's Forest Hills School District enlists coaches to discuss substance abuse with their teams. These coaches, Norma Wolf (1986) reports, recruit student athletes, especially team captains, who agree to encourage other students to stay clear of drugs and alcohol.

What Social Issues Are Involved?

It is possible that the fever and rhetoric of an "antidrug" campaign could deflect attention from the deeper issues of fear, despair, and alienation, Richard Sagor (1987) warns. He advises educators to attend to the conditions that lead to self-destructive activity. Adult responses should be informed, tempered to the occasion, and reflect not accusation but rather concern for the well-being of the student.

There must also be the concession that drug use is not limited to young people, and that, in fact, alcohol abuse presents the most serious drug-related health and social concern in our country. Care should be taken not to engender division among or within students, but to create instead, Sagor recommends, "meaningful, useful, socially productive roles for teenagers in our society."

How Can Schools Plan and Implement Drug Abuse Prevention Programs?

The lack of significant success in stemming drug use is almost always due, C. Lynn Fox and others (1987) say, "to an inadequate understanding of both a process and the content of a comprehensive planning and implementation model." They suggest identifying a team of interested, committed staff and community members to carry out the following five phases of a prevention and intervention plan:

- Needs Assessment—utilize surveys, interviews, pretesting, and attention to

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contributory social norms and processes to gain an understanding of root causes, degree, and characteristics of local drug use.

- *Planning Process*—*prioritize specific goals, organize methods, and assign tasks.*
- *Implementation*—*educate parents, staff, and students; sponsor drug-free activities; identify and refer substance abusers for treatment; establish peer support and followup systems.*
- *Evaluation*—*examine pre- and post-student data and measure program effectiveness.*
- *Dissemination*—*inform the local community about the program and request their input.*

Among additional strategies for mounting an effective program, Hooper suggests that school leaders carefully evaluate their district's present policies; revise them or develop new ones, as necessary; "involve parents, law enforcement and health officials, drug treatment specialists," and others in shaping those policies; and vigorously enforce the policies. Also, she advises districts to "develop curricula that encourage students to 'say no' to drugs and alcohol."

What Are Some Other Factors to Consider When Planning a Drug Abuse Program?

The promotion of student *self-esteem and a positive school atmosphere should* permeate any substance abuse program. An emphasis on active learning, higher academic standards, and individualized instruction can help maintain students' focus on their own education.

Dealing with potentially dangerous substances and issues of intrusion and invasion of personal freedom necessitates a thorough and updated knowledge of relevant laws. Firm, consistent policies against drug and alcohol abuse lend credibility and seriousness to assistance programs. It is also important to involve students in peer support groups and student-organized, drug-free social activities.

The best plans are comprehensive, long-term, and integrated into overall school curricula and policy. They respond to the diverse needs and particular characteristics of each school district and each student. And, as Sagor reminds, we must restructure our institutions "to focus on youth's legitimate need for self-esteem and usefulness . . . . we must make peace with our children."

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STRATEGIC PLANNING

Most school board members and district administrators instinctively like the idea of strategic planning. Many of them, however, confess to being confused over exactly what it is and what it requires. Strategic planning, writes William Cook, Jr. (1988), is "aimed at total concentration of the organization's resources on mutually predetermined measurable outcomes." An effective plan, by this definition, encompasses an organization's entire resources and purpose. It must be constructed deliberately and thoughtfully.

What Are the Benefits of Strategic Planning?

Many benefits of planning are patently obvious. An organization simply cannot know what it is doing and what it intends to do unless it periodically establishes and monitors its goals. Strategic planning enables people to influence the future. The very act of planning implies that schools are more than passive pawns in the hands of socioeconomic forces.

Such forces will soon overwhelm districts that refuse to plan for them. Harry Cooper (1985) identifies several trends that already strongly affect schools: an aging population, a growing proportion of minority students, and growing numbers of special interest groups competing for scarce public resources.

In 1983, the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) in its publication *Planning for Tomorrow's Schools*, identified several other key developments that continue to demand the attention of many school districts. School officials must plan for shortages of teachers, particularly in math, science, and bilingual education, and they must prepare to accommodate growing numbers of Hispanic students, many of whom will not speak English. More students of all types will continue to come from single-parent homes.

These profound demographic changes will continue to reshape the nation and its schools in the coming decades. They make strategic planning particularly important.

How Does a District Develop a Strategic Plan?

A strategic plan begins with a mission statement. This documents briefly summarizes the district's purpose and operations, what it wants to accomplish, and what it does. All the organization's goals should support this statement.

Cooper recommends that those participating in the planning process then identify major trends affecting the school district. What are their influence? Which most demand attention, and which can be most effectively responded to? Answering such questions enables planners to determine which trends should play the largest role in molding their plan.

Most authors recommend a less structured approach to the initial planning process. Cook asserts that "the best plans are based more on the collective intuition of the planning team than on so-called hard data." He urges planning teams to meet for at least thirty hours over three days for a "time-on-task concentration of intelligence, energy, and emotion."

Thomas Hart (1988) recommends using several small groups to begin the planning process. Within these groups participants discuss, combine and rank their goals for the district. Representatives from each group report to the larger body so that everyone shares a sense of cohesion and consensus.

Once the planning group enjoys a degree of consensus, it can release its goals to subcommittees that formulate objectives for each goal. They should specify when the task is to be completed and who is responsible for completing it.

Jerry Herman (1988) provides examples of how goals and objectives work. One such goal is to develop committees "to promote ownership and collaborative decision making in the district." One of several objectives for accomplishing that goal entails establishing "a policy advisory committee composed of representatives from all stakeholder groups." The person assigned to that objective and the date by which it should be completed can also be included in the plan.

Neither goals nor objectives should be solidified too quickly. The subcommittees in charge of formulating objectives may discover that some goals simply cannot be implemented. Furthermore, a careful cost-benefit analysis and forums for public response must occur before a district commits itself to a plan.

What Areas Should Be Included in a Strategic Plan?

Strategic plans are typically comprehensive. Hence they should include everything essential to a district's mission.

This is not to say that these documents must be exceedingly long and complex. Hart reports that Oregon's Centennial School District created an effective plan with but three broad goals: curriculum, instruction, and community. Joseph D'Amico (1988) demonstrates that strategic plans can be quite specific. He cites a Northeast school that, as part of its planning process, discerned that its major problems boiled down to student apathy and misbehavior. It chose to focus on identifying these problems' causes and formulating and implementing solutions.

AASA recommends anticipating future trends. Wise planners will pay particular attention to demographic changes, shrinking financial support, strengthening their curriculums, and attracting, developing, and retaining effective teachers. They must also plan to more fully utilize computers and other

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new instructional technologies and to prepare students for a labor market that will favor white collar jobs over blue collar ones and service jobs over agricultural employment.

Who Should Be Included in Creating a Strategic Plan?

Authorities agree that everyone concerned with public education should participate in the planning process.

Janice Johnson (1989) describes a Phoenix school district's approach. Its twenty-five-person planning team included two board members, the superintendent and his six-person cabinet, nine parents (including four business people), two teachers, two principals, one support staff, and the presidents of the teacher association and citizen advisory group. Principals recruited community members for the fifteen committees that formulated objectives for the goals set by the planning team. Such an eclectic mixture, Johnson concludes, "taps new reservoirs of support and gets current supporters more involved."

A variety of formats encourages a variety of groups to take part. Board members might participate in the planning during a retreat, teachers during an inservice day, and students through a congress (Hart). The general public can articulate its concerns through public meetings and surveys. Some districts insist that community members constitute the majority of their planning committees to keep educators from dominating the planning process. Yet, as the AASA points out: "Educators have responsibility to lead the community toward desirable educational goals, not just to cater completely to community desires."

Cook asserts that the planning team should consist of one-third to one-half administrators, with its remaining members drawn from a broad section of the school community. Occupation should not, he stresses, be the only criterion for being selected to this important committee. Members should be articulate people of good will who will pursue consensus over special interests.

How Should a Strategic Plan Be Implemented?

A strategic plan should be fully discussed and publicized before it is implemented. It is, as Hart points out, an opportunity to share the district's educational vision with the entire community.

The plan must also find its way into the district's budget and its job descriptions. Even the most carefully formulated document will be academic if sufficient money and time are not dedicated to meeting its objectives.

The people responsible for carrying out the plan's various objectives should report their progress on at least a quarterly basis. Deadlines and objectives can be modified or even eliminated, but not without thorough discussion by the district's leadership.

Strategic plans should be for at least five years. They should be reviewed annually, with a particularly thorough review at the end of the first year. Administrators should resist the urge to coast through annual reviews. These are the times to check the plan against what the district is actually doing and to make adjustments in either the plan or in how the plan is or is not being followed.

A strategic plan, after all, is not simply a document. It is a district's road map to the future. Its lines must always be true and clear.

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SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION

Superintendents are the only school district employees not supervised by another professional. Teachers are evaluated by principals, and principals are evaluated by superintendents. Can board members evaluate superintendents? Do superintendents need to be evaluated?

The answer to both questions is "yes." Certainly a superintendent, the district's CEO, should receive regular and formal feedback and guidance.

Board members can provide such feedback and guidance only if they proceed carefully and with their superintendent's cooperation.

Why Should Superintendents Be Evaluated?

Many school districts evaluate their superintendents for legal reasons. Some state laws require it, or it may be part of the superintendent's contract. In any event, formal assessment provides a basis for evaluating weak areas and rewarding satisfactory job performance. An evaluation offers protection from lawsuits and criticism from both terminated superintendents and constituents angered over the superintendent's performance and salary. However, at its best, evaluation is a communication process.

Evaluation has more subtle and far-reaching advantages, however. It enhances communication and clarifies the board's role. "The board can govern when it knows what its superintendent is going to do and whether it's getting done," notes the New Jersey School Boards Association (1987). Evaluation requires defining what is expected of the superintendent. It requires identifying and prioritizing the district's goals.

Effective superintendent assessment certainly benefits the superintendent. It offers encouraging praise, instructive criticism, and suggestions for overcoming shortcomings and problems.

Superintendent evaluation clarifies roles, expectations, and performance.

What Is the First Step in Superintendent Evaluation?

Boards should first create a policy describing the purpose and steps of the evaluation process.

George Redfern (1980) identifies several aspects of a solid superintendent evaluation policy. The document should explain the purpose of the evaluation and the superintendent's role in it. He also says the policy should explain how the evaluation will be conducted, assert the importance of gathering evidence rather than just opinions, and establish that superintendent evaluation is linked to district goal setting.

Indeed, long-range planning documents are an essential part of superintendent evaluation. So are the superintendent's job description and written policies defining the division of responsibilities between board members and the superintendent.

An evaluation policy is also concerned with less crucial issues. It must describe how the board will determine what to evaluate, what instrument or method it will use to evaluate, and when the evaluation's various steps will occur.

An evaluation policy, then, cannot be written hastily. It must define and explain all aspects of the evaluation process. Hence the evaluation process should not proceed until it is written.

What Should Be Evaluated?

Many school districts simply use a standard checklist form to evaluate their superintendent. This approach is quick and easy, but little else recommends it.

The performance appraisal system of superintendent evaluation is a much more useful and flexible tool. As its name implies, it is more concerned with achievements than personal characteristics. It also assumes that each district will have unique goals for its superintendent. One district may focus on improving the school's public image and funding while an adjoining one stresses revising the curriculum or negotiating a more satisfying teacher contract.

Evaluation by performance appraisal requires board members to identify and prioritize the superintendent's major goals before the year begins. It is important for both board members and the superintendent to participate fully in this process. Establishing administrative goals enables the board to assert its policy-making powers and to exercise its legal mandate to guide the overall direction of public schools. Yet superintendents possess special professional knowledge about school administration and should certainly have input over what their jobs will entail for the next year. They may also have a much more realistic idea of what can be accomplished.

Board members, then, must be careful to formulate the superintendent's goals carefully and cooperatively. "In performance appraisal," note Ronald Booth and Gerald Glaub (1978a), "the school board evaluates the superintendent's results in reaching agreed-upon goals, solving agreed-upon problems, and making agreed-upon improvements." Alienating the superintendent by unilaterally imposing a set of goals would defeat most of the evaluation processes' benefits.

Goals need not be numerous; many boards have found that three to five suffice. It is certainly not necessary to include such routine duties as report writing, unless the superintendent has been deficient in performance. Some districts that use the performance appraisal system choose to include some of the superintendent's personal traits, particularly ones that have interfered with accomplishing important goals in the past.

By David Pearman

How Can the Superintendent's Performance Be Measured?

Goals are often general, slippery statements that are hard to define precisely. For example, what does it mean to "improve relations with the local media"? Carefully formulated objectives answer such questions. They define, often with statistical precision, what constitutes success.

Objectives, like goals, should be established before the evaluation period begins. "The board," write Booth and Glaub (1978b), "knows what it is looking for before it starts to evaluate." Carefully written objectives ensure that the superintendent and board know, in some detail, what is expected of the superintendent.

To use the above example, a variety of particular objectives could measure how effectively the superintendent relates to parents. The superintendent's objectives for that goal could include attending at least eight PTA meetings, establishing forums at each school where parents can discuss their concerns with administrators, and so forth. As in formulating goals, the board should listen closely to its superintendent to ensure that objectives are reasonable. Indeed, many boards rely heavily on their superintendents' education and experience to establish precise, measurable objectives.

Yet even carefully written objectives cannot transform the evaluation process from an art into a science. Board members must be sensitive to the fact that worthy objectives can be accomplished in unethical and damaging ways and that not all performance—good or bad—can be quantified.

How Should the Evaluation Be Presented?

The evaluation process culminates in a meeting of the superintendent and board, but much work should precede that meeting.

Richard Dunhoff (1982) recommends that boards meet quarterly with their superintendents to discuss progress on meeting goals and objectives. The superintendent may, particularly at such times, request changes in the goals and objectives. Some objectives may be unrealistic or may not be having their intended effect. The board should not, however, quickly agree to rewrite or discard the superintendent's objectives.

A preappraisal meeting should occur about a month before the final appraisal meeting. At the first meeting the superintendent can present a detailed self-appraisal and respond to board members' questions and concerns. Board members can then compile a final evaluation, combining the superintendent's self-appraisal with their own impressions.

The final evaluation should be in written form, though it may also be presented orally. It should, of course, focus on how effectively the superintendent accomplished the goals and objectives the board and superintendent agreed on nearly a year before. Both praise and criticism should be moderate, and the latter should be accompanied with suggestions for how to improve.

As in all aspects of the evaluative process, the superintendent should be an integral part of this meeting. Some boards elect to let their superintendent lead this final discussion since self-evaluation is usually the most enlightening.

The meeting should quickly be followed by one that sets goals for the next year. Evaluation, like planning, has stages but not a true beginning or end.

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TEAM MANAGEMENT

Far from being a passing fad, the management team—a formal arrangement enabling the superintendent to consult with other personnel on decisions—has become a permanent feature of American education. The myth of the school leader as a "solitary, benevolent autocrat" is misguided, says Patricia Wilhelm (1984), as principals have always belonged to district management groups and school communities. Likewise, superintendents have come to rely on other administrators' expertise to resolve the increasingly complex problems facing the schools.

Bryce Grindle (1982) notes that the team approach seems "compatible with the best concepts of management, democracy, and open social systems." Moreover, the concept has proved responsive to pressure from teachers and parents to redistribute power, broaden participation in the decision-making process, and improve administrative efficiency.

What Is Team Management?

A *management team* might best be described as "a group whose role is formalized and legitimized and whose purpose is problem solving and/or decision making" (Duvall and Erickson 1981). The school management team usually includes a cross-section of experienced central office and building-level administrators committed to a "structured decision-making process endorsed by the school board and the superintendent" (Lindelow and Bentley forthcoming). Team management offers organizations an opportunity to improve the quality of decisions made and fosters consensus where none was thought possible.

What Are the Elements of Team Management?

To become more than a new label for traditional hierarchy, team management requires sound leadership from the superintendent, a good working agreement between the board and its administration, and an organizational model suitable for the district. Above all, team management demands strong commitment to building trust among all participants.

Changes in the district's power structure are largely informal. Success depends on such intangible factors as team members' willingness to be open, trustworthy, and nonjudgmental and the board's and the superintendent's eagerness to share power while retaining final responsibility for team decisions (Anderson 1988).

What Are Some Problems with Participatory Decision-Making?

For all its positive effects on decision quality and staff morale, participative decision-making can lead to frustration if not enough information-sharing occurs within the group (Wood 1984). Other factors hindering group effectiveness are tendencies to avoid conflict-producing discussion, differences between problem-solving actions and beliefs, and misconceptions concerning levels of participation.

To avoid these problems, school districts must clearly communicate the approaches and processes that will be followed, use participatory decision-making *at all* hierarchical levels, and offer appropriate training for group members used to more autocratic approaches. Team members must also learn how to handle dissent, allow sufficient time to make group decisions, and develop an effective self-evaluation process.

What Are Some Good Examples of Team Management?

Several districts that John Lindelow and Scott Bentley describe have developed successful management teams over the past decade. Yakima (Washington) School District's team "resembles a legislative body, with many small groups doing most of the work." Once a group recommends an action, the entire seventy-two member team decides the issue by consensus. The team also prepares salary schedules and uses position papers to facilitate the policy-making process. Yakima's management team is best characterized by its flexibility, responsiveness, and clearly delineated communication channels.

The Rio Linda (California) Elementary School District's forty-member team, while smaller, resembles Yakima's configuration, with small groups doing most of the work and making recommendations to the larger team. Unlike Yakima, the Rio Linda team "works toward a solution" until reaching a general agreement (rather than consensus), say Lindelow and Bentley. The keys to Rio Linda's success are well-established communication patterns and solid support from the school board.

Attleboro (Massachusetts) School Department also has an interlocking team structure, but depends more on informal, open discussion than on formalized communication processes. During its formative stage, the team relied heavily on consultants, who held seminars on group dynamics and related team-building strategies. Attleboro's team has worked together so harmoniously that no formal administration-board agreement has been needed.

For additional profiles of successful school management teams, see Anderson (1988).

How Might Team Management Be Further Expanded in School Settings?

School districts can broaden the management team by tapping the talents and creative energies of two underrepresented sectors—women and minorities—and by involving teachers in school-based teams. Despite women

By Margaret Madden

administrators' special collaborative decision-making and community-building skills, school management teams are overwhelmingly dominated by (white) males.

Ethnic minorities are especially in need of encouragement. At a time when schools are gearing up to serve increasing numbers of black, Hispanic, and poor students, the number of minority teachers and administrators is actually shrinking.

The team approach also can be extended to the faculty. Principals can adopt instructional leadership teams that pool the expertise of administrators, department heads, and teachers. Using the team approach, "critical functions are assigned to those most capable of performing them rather than being centralized in the principal's office" (Glatthorn and Newberg 1984).

Most recently the "second wave" of educational reform calls for structuring the schools and reshaping teachers' roles to allow greater autonomy, status, and decision-making responsibility (Lieberman 1988). In South Bend, Indiana, for example, retiring district-level content specialists are being replaced by teacher specialists. Teacher collaboration is helping to develop leadership potential and may help stem the exodus of experienced teachers from the profession.

Expanding the school leadership team involves more than creating a few new roles or providing extra help for the principal. The idea is to reorganize schools and create a collaborative work mode to replace teacher isolation and break down management/labor barriers (Lieberman 1988). At its best, the management team approach reshapes the administrator's role so that power and authority may be shared with other staff in a nonthreatening way that builds organizational commitment and enhances the entire educational process.

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TRAINING AND RECRUITING MINORITY TEACHERS

Since 1980 the number of minority students enrolled in public schools has been rising while the number of minority teachers has been falling. Minority students now make up nearly 30 percent of the elementary and secondary school-age population, while the number of minority teachers has fallen from 11.7 percent to 10.3 percent during the past fifteen years, according to sources cited by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (1987).

The decline in the number of minority teachers appears to result from several factors: increased career opportunities in other fields, a decline in higher education enrollment rates by minorities, the growing use of teacher competency testing (failure rates for blacks and other minorities are higher than for whites), and a dissatisfaction with the teaching profession.

How Is the Shortage of Minority Teachers Expected to Affect the Quality of Educational Services?

Both the National Commission for Excellence in Teacher Education and the Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession warned that the decline in the number of minority teachers has serious consequences for both minority and majority children. The race and background of teachers "influence children's attitudes toward school, their views of their own and others intrinsic worth," the Carnegie report stated.

According to the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, "A quality education requires that all students be exposed to the variety of cultural perspectives that represents the nation at large. Such exposure can be accomplished only via a multiethnic teaching force in which racial and ethnic groups are included at a level of parity with their numbers in the population."

Why Is Minority Enrollment Declining at the Higher Education Level?

Martin Haberman (1987) projects that by the year 2000 "only 5 percent of *all* college students will be from ethnic minorities." Even if every minority who graduates from college enters teaching, minorities would still be underrepresented. One of the most important factors affecting black and Hispanic students' decision to attend college continues to be the student's family income level. While the "secondary school graduation rates of minority students increased between 1975 and 1983 . . . they have not been matched by an increase in college attendance," reports the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education (1986).

These enrollment declines reflect the cuts in the federal financial aid programs (the major portion of financial aid available to low income students is the loan program), inadequate high school counseling, and the absence of systematic college recruitment programs for minority students.

Historically the majority of black teachers (more than 50 percent) have come out of black colleges and universities. These institutions are under severe pressures, and many may lose accreditation for their departments of education due to changes in state requirements. The ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education notes that "since 1978 the number of new teachers produced by 45 predominantly black colleges has declined by 47 percent."

In sum, the central problem, writes Patricia Albjerg Graham (1987), "is that blacks in the U.S. are not getting as good an education as whites are."

What Can Be Done to Change the Situation?

Any lasting effort to improve the representation of minorities in the teaching ranks must address multiple societal problems. First of all, educational opportunities for minorities must be improved at the elementary and secondary levels. Schools must be made more effective at educating minority students. At the sametime, society must address the needs of families living in poverty.

Colleges need to dvelop better recruitment programs o attract minority students to their campuses and help those students successfully complete higher education degrees. There is a need for imaginative programs developed through private nd public resources to attract minority students to education. Federal aid programs for minority teachers or itcentives such as loan forgiveness for minority teachers could be used.

The following ten programs were recommended by the American Association of Colleges for Tacher Education for developing minority teachers: (1) A national scholarship program for minority students whoenter teaching, (2) state scholarship programs, (3) targeted high school work-study programs, (4) targetedcollege work-study programs, (5) a program stressing the need for better articulation between two-year and four-yea institutions, (6) assistantships and grats programs, (7) loan repayment incentive programs, (8) support programs for reentry and career changers, (9) special support programs for minorities accepting teaching jobs in ethnically diverse communities, and (10) an institutional grant program to research teacher evaluation models for minority teachers.

What Are Some Innovative Ways of Recruiting Minority Teachers?

Some school districts and training institutions, as the following examples show, are making aggressive attempts to recruit and train minority teachers. In the Wake County Public School District (Raleigh, North Carolina) officials realized that the only way to solve the problem long-term is to convince their own minority students to pursue teaching as a career through a program providing college scholarships to minority students (Rodman 1988).

The University of Oregon has developed a statewide effort for recruiting secondary junior and senior minority students into its College of Education. A brochure is distributed to all minority students who took the SAT test and all community college and high school counselors throughout the state. Special recruiters from the College of Education also travel to schools with large minority populations. In 1987 Oregon initiated a tuition waiver program for minority students attending state colleges and universities.

Haberman, noting that "the largest pool of blacks and Hispanics is in junior college," advises universities to establish linkages with local two-year institutions. Another potentially fruitful approach is the recruitment of midcareer minority professionals into teaching. The state of Maryland, for example, is currently publicizing teaching opportunities to those about to retire at military bases throughout the state.

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